6 Insurance Policies You Don't Need

FROM **AOL Daily Finance**

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Reader's Digest

The World's Dumbest

Criminals, Celebrities, Lawsuits, Tweets, and more!

You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll feel so smart ...

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25 Things Your Eye Doctor Won't Tell You

PAGE 172

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PAGE 20

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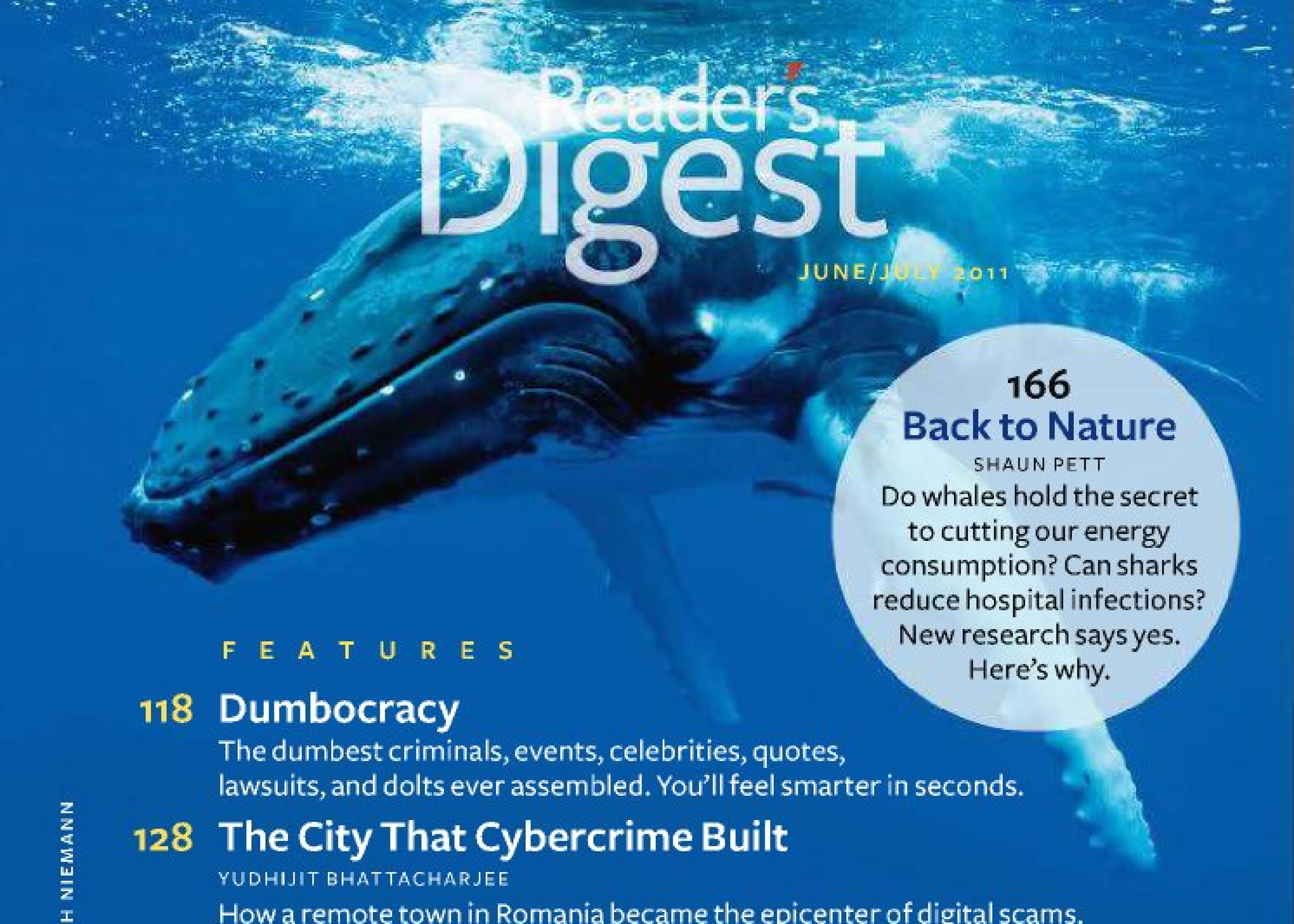

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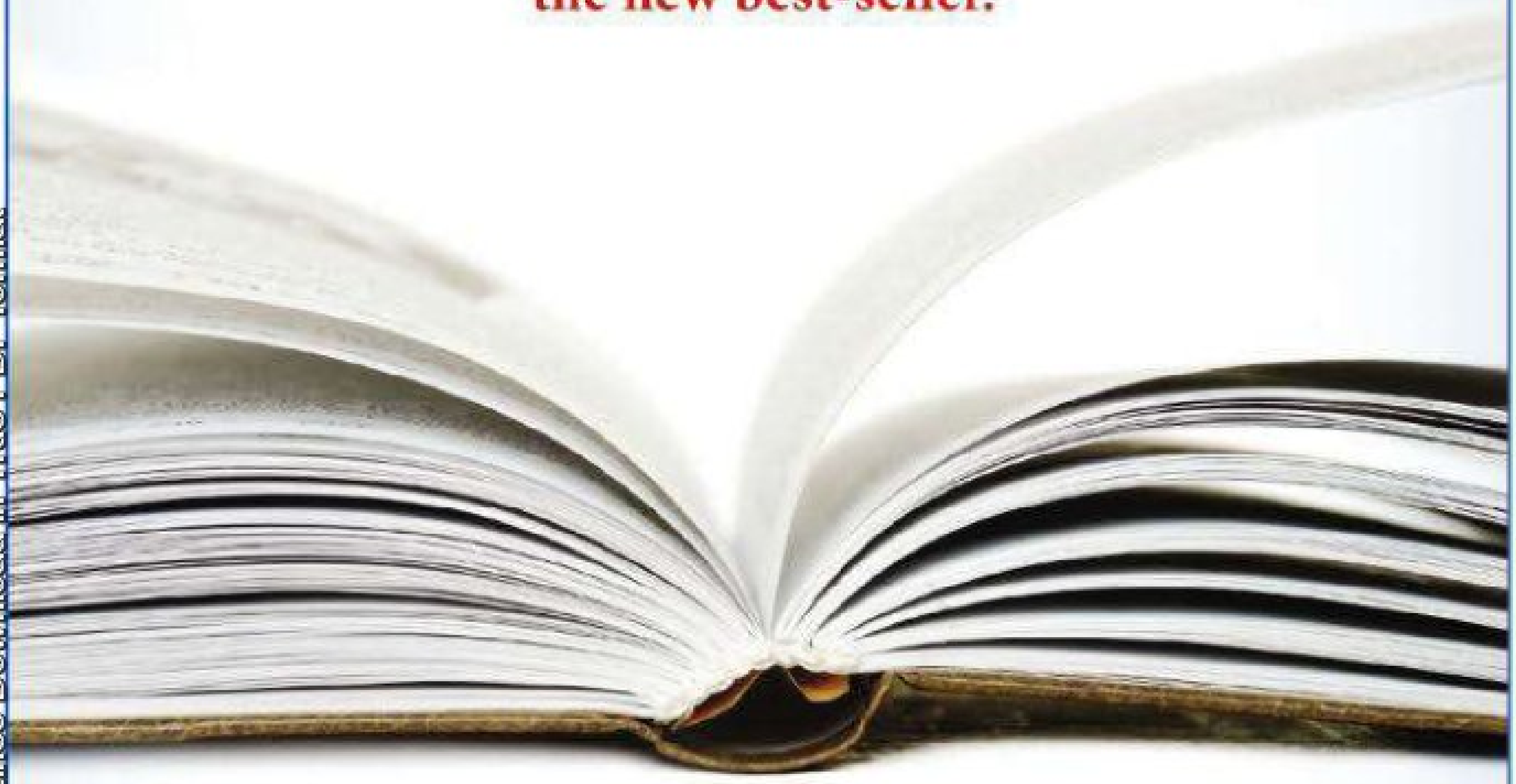

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HR Rants and Raves

As experienced HR professionals, we found "Get Hired, Not Fired" to be very demeaning, we-versus-them, unprofessional, and completely off base. If the average employee had bad feelings toward HR before reading that piece, they must dislike us even more now. How difficult will it be for an applicant to schedule an employment interview or go to HR to ask a question after reading your article?

Fran King, Kathy Ervin, Emily Peck, Bluffton, Ohio

Get Hired, Not Fired
50 Secrets Your HR Person Won't Tell You
(plus favorite curveball questions and office horror stories)
CATBERT: EVIL DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES
MANY OF OUR EMPLOYMENT POLICIES ARE PRACTICAL JOKES, BUT IT'S MORE FUN IF WE DON'T TELL YOU WHICH ONES.

Finding a job isn't about how long you've been looking—it's about being in the right place at the right time. If HR "professionals" would simply get out of the way or even help those who are trying to find a job, maybe more people would get hired. Perhaps these are secrets because some of the behaviors are shameful, discriminatory, and likely illegal.

Karen Seago, Bryan, Texas

It's unbelievable that employers still expect employees to be loyal, let alone productive, when management behaves with a complete lack of integrity. No wonder our economy has been going steadily down the tubes for decades!

Linda Wilson, Houston, Texas

It's amusing that some of the human resources professionals who criticize job applicants refuse to hold themselves to higher standards.

Kevin Hillegas, Neenah, Wisconsin

I'm so thankful that I'm self-employed and don't have to jump through hoops for the amusement of HR. It's pitiful to have a job where you can make or break a person's life on a whim. How do they sleep at night?

Don Winchester, Cedar Rapids, Iowa

Free Opinions

Thank you for this thoughtful defense of the First Amendment ("The Freedoms That Make Us Great"). Hurtful speech, no matter

WHICH MANNERS NEED TO MAKE A COMEBACK? ... THE READER'S DIGEST VERSION

Where have all our manners gone? We asked our Facebook followers to share the kind gestures they'd like to see more of—and more often.

>> Children looking people in the eye when spoken to.

M. M., Lee's Summit, Missouri

>> Covering your mouth when coughing. *J. E.*, Victoria, Australia

>> No cursing in public.

C. S., Shelbyville, Indiana

>> A handshake with a proper greeting. *V. F.*, Kulim, Malaysia

>> Removing hats in restaurants and church. *J. E.*, Centerville, Minnesota

>> Written thank-you notes!

C. M., Stevensville, Montana

>> Children calling people "Mr." or "Mrs." It's a small thing, but there is a lot of respect in it.

B. M., Adrian, Michigan

>> "Please," "thank you," and fully covered buttocks.

A. S., Bay Point, California

>> Apologizing face-to-face instead of on Facebook! *A. M.*, Tamil Nadu, India

>> Chewing with your mouth closed!

R. K., Globe, Arizona

>> Excusing yourself to take a phone call. *J. B.*, Jamestown, Rhode Island

>> How about a simple "Yes, please," "no, thank you," "excuse me," or "I'm sorry!"

E. R., Crescent City, California

how vile, is just as necessary and just as precious as any other speech. When you suppress one opinion as "hurtful" to a particular group, it inevitably leads to suppressing other ideas, including antigovernment opinion, as "hurtful to all." *Harvey Sprayberry*, Boiling Springs, South Carolina

Just Forget It

The article "Stop 'Helping' Me" was hilarious—and so true (Tech Digest). Every time I use Google, I am reminded of something I searched for three years ago. Google is amazingly helpful, but not in that department! "Origami-shaped superheroes"? Really? Keep up the good work!

Hannah King Thomas, Newnan, Georgia

A Key Point

In "13 Things Your Locksmith Won't Tell You," Michelle Crouch mentions getting a double-cylinder lock that needs a key on the inside (Home Digest). But in just about every community I've ever dealt with, these locks are against fire code. People in a panic and little children will not be able to unlock the door. *Jilly Whiting*, Freeport, Illinois

Editor's note: Although some local fire codes do not permit these locks on primary entryways, others do.

Underachievers

I can get past the man who skips a friend's wedding because he's too

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lazy to get out of bed and the ridiculously lazy women who aren't motivated enough to move a chair or hang a hammock ("Over & Under Achievers"). But when *Reader's Digest* starts making light of spraying Roundup all over the backyard, needlessly throwing away plastic kitty-litter boxes, and using paint stripper to clean pans, it just stops being funny. You can't have articles on how to "Green-Clean Your Kitchen Sink and Bathtub" and then give space to someone who uses a hazardous chemical to clean something he eats from.

Mark Fischer, Webster, New York

German Gridiron?

I was surprised to see *Reader's Digest* credit Jimmy Johnson with a well-known quote from Goethe. I realize that Jimmy is a famous American football coach and all that, but I was unaware that he spoke German and served as inspiration for Goethe's wisdom! *Peter Silzer*, Monterey, California

Editor's note: We can't attest to Jimmy Johnson's knowledge of German, but he does know the common translation of Goethe's quote. Johnson included it in an essay from December 1995 that appeared in a number of newspapers. Our attribution should have made that clear.

In Our Debt

Former U.S. Secretary of Labor Robert B. Reich is correct when he says we must roll up our sleeves because we have overspent ("How the Great Recession Changed Us"). But he overlooks the role of our government in overspending. Washington is not quick to understand the urgency of our condition. Sadly, it is this public debt we are handing on to the next generation. *John Drake*, Loomis, California

Pleased with Cheese

For years I've thought about writing in, but "How to Make the Perfect Grilled Cheese Sandwich" in Food Digest made me start typing. I've been burning sandwiches or undercooking the cheese for years. Your short, simple article really helped, and my wife and I thank you.

Wesley Snyder, Sioux Falls, South Dakota

How to Reach Us

>> Letters to the Editor

- letters@readersdigest.com
- React, Reader's Digest, PO Box 6100, Harlan, Iowa 51593-1600.

Include your full name, address, e-mail, and daytime phone number.

We may edit letters and use them in all print and electronic media.

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For short humor items, please see page 105. We regret that we cannot accept or acknowledge unsolicited artwork, photographs, or article-length manuscripts.

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STELARA® is a prescription medicine approved to treat adults 18 years and older with moderate or severe plaque psoriasis that involves large areas or many areas of their body, who may benefit from taking injections or pills (systemic therapy) or phototherapy (treatment using ultraviolet light alone or with pills).

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION

STELARA® is a prescription medicine that affects your immune system. STELARA® can increase your chance of having serious side effects including:

Serious Infections

STELARA® may lower your ability to fight infections and may increase your risk of infections. While taking STELARA® some people have serious infections, which may require hospitalization, including tuberculosis (TB), and infections caused by bacteria, fungi, or viruses.

- Your doctor should check you for TB before starting STELARA® and watch you closely for signs and symptoms of TB during treatment with STELARA®
- If your doctor feels that you are at risk for TB, you may be treated for TB before and during treatment with STELARA®

You should not start taking STELARA® if you have any kind of infection unless your doctor says it is okay.

Before starting STELARA®, tell your doctor if you think you have an infection or have symptoms of an infection such as:

- fever, sweats, or chills
- muscle aches
- cough
- shortness of breath
- blood in your phlegm
- weight loss
- warm, red, or painful skin or sores on your body
- diarrhea or stomach pain
- burning when you urinate or urinate more often than normal
- feel very tired
- are being treated for an infection
- get a lot of infections or have infections that keep coming back
- have TB, or have been in close contact with someone who has TB

After starting STELARA®, call your doctor right away if you have any symptoms of an infection (see above).

STELARA® can make you more likely to get infections or make an infection that you have worse. People who have a genetic problem where the body does not make any of the proteins interleukin 12 (IL-12) and interleukin 23 (IL-23) are at a higher risk for certain serious infections that can spread throughout the body and cause death. It is not known if people who take STELARA® will get any of these infections because of the effects of STELARA® on these proteins.

Cancer

STELARA® may decrease the activity of your immune system and increase your risk for certain types of cancer. Tell your doctor if you have ever had any type of cancer.

Reversible posterior leukoencephalopathy syndrome (RPLS)

RPLS is a rare condition that affects the brain and can cause death. The cause of RPLS is not known. If RPLS is found early and treated, most people recover. Tell your doctor right away if you have any new or worsening medical problems including: headache, seizures, confusion, and vision problems.

Serious Allergic Reactions

Serious allergic reactions can occur. Get medical help right away if you have any symptoms such as: feeling faint, swelling of your face, eyelids, tongue, or throat, trouble breathing, throat or chest tightness, or skin rash.

Before receiving STELARA® tell your doctor if you:

- have any of the conditions or symptoms listed above for serious infections, cancer, or RPLS
- have recently received or are scheduled to receive an immunization (vaccine). People who take STELARA® should not receive live vaccines. Tell your doctor if anyone in your house needs a vaccine. The viruses used in some types of vaccines can spread to people with a weakened immune system, and can cause serious problems. **You should not receive the BCG vaccine during the one year before taking STELARA® or one year after you stop taking STELARA®.** Non-live vaccinations received while taking STELARA® may not fully protect you from disease.
- are receiving or have received allergy shots, especially for serious allergic reactions
- ever had an allergic reaction to STELARA®
- receive phototherapy for your psoriasis
- have any other medical conditions
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STELARA® will harm your unborn baby. You and your doctor should decide if you will take STELARA®
- are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed. It is thought that STELARA® passes into your breast milk. You should not breast-feed while taking STELARA® without first talking to your doctor.

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Especially tell your doctor if you take:

- other medicines that affect your immune system
- certain medicines that can affect how your liver breaks down other medicines

Common side effects of STELARA® include: upper respiratory infections, headache, and tiredness.

These are not all of the side effects with STELARA® Tell your doctor about any side effect that bothers you or does not go away. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA.
Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please read the Medication Guide for STELARA® and discuss any questions you have with your doctor.

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(ustekinumab)

If you suffer from **moderate or severe plaque psoriasis...**

Imagine the possibilities of clearer skin

4 doses a year after 2 starter doses

Discover a proven psoriasis therapy. In a medical study, 7 out of 10 STELARA® patients saw at least 75% clearer skin at 12 weeks, and 6 out of 10 patients had their plaque psoriasis rated as cleared or minimal at 12 weeks. *Individual results may vary.*

The safety and effectiveness of STELARA® have not been evaluated beyond two years.

Discover a convenient psoriasis therapy. STELARA® is an injection given under the skin by a healthcare provider as directed by your doctor at weeks 0, 4, and every 12 weeks thereafter. Each injection is given using a small needle. STELARA® is available in 45 mg or 90 mg doses; your doctor will choose the right dose for you. Make sure you keep all your scheduled follow-up appointments.

Ask your dermatologist about STELARA®

Please read the Important Safety Information on the adjacent page.

Learn more about STELARA®
Text STELARA to 80800,
call 1-866-709-1050,
or visit www.STELARAinfo.com

fiorelegal.com

MEDICATION GUIDE FOR STELARA® INJECTION

Read this Medication Guide before you start taking STELARA® and each time before you get an injection. There may be new information. This Medication Guide does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition or treatment with STELARA®.

What is the most important information I should know about STELARA®?

STELARA® is a medicine that affects your immune system. STELARA® can increase your chances of having serious side effects, including:

Serious Infections: STELARA® may lower the ability of your immune system to fight infections and may increase your risk of infections. Some people have serious infections while taking STELARA®, including tuberculosis (TB), and infections caused by bacteria, fungi, or viruses. Some people have to be hospitalized for treatment of their infection.

- Your doctor should check you for TB before starting STELARA®.
- If your doctor feels that you are at risk for TB, you may be treated with medicine for TB before you begin treatment with STELARA® and during treatment with STELARA®.
- Your doctor should watch you closely for signs and symptoms of TB during treatment with STELARA®.

You should not start taking STELARA® if you have any kind of infection unless your doctor says it is okay.

Before starting STELARA®, tell your doctor if you think you have an infection or have symptoms of an infection such as:

- fever, sweats, or chills
- muscle aches
- cough
- shortness of breath
- blood in your phlegm
- weight loss
- warm, red, or painful skin or sores on your body
- diarrhea or stomach pain
- burning when you urinate or urinate more often than normal
- feel very tired
- are being treated for an infection
- get a lot of infections or have infections that keep coming back
- have TB, or have been in close contact with someone who has TB

After starting STELARA®, call your doctor right away if you have any symptoms of an infection (see above).

STELARA® can make you more likely to get infections or make an infection that you have worse.

People who have a genetic problem where the body does not make any of the proteins interleukin 12 (IL-12) and interleukin 23 (IL-23) are at a higher risk for certain serious infections. These infections can spread throughout the body and cause death. It is not known if people who take STELARA® will get any of these infections, because of the effects of STELARA® on these proteins in your body.

Cancers:

STELARA® may decrease the activity of your immune system and increase your risk for certain types of cancers. Tell your doctor if you have ever had any type of cancer.

Reversible posterior leukoencephalopathy syndrome (RPLS):

RPLS is a rare condition that affects the brain and can cause death. The cause of RPLS is not known. If RPLS is found early and treated, most people recover. Tell your doctor right away if you have any new or worsening medical problems including:

- headache
- seizures
- confusion
- vision problems

What is STELARA®?

STELARA® is a prescription medicine used to treat adults 18 years and older with moderate or severe psoriasis that involves large areas or many areas of their body, who may benefit from taking injections or pills (systemic therapy) or phototherapy (treatment using ultraviolet light alone or with pills).

STELARA® may improve your psoriasis but may also lower the ability of your immune system to fight infections. This may also increase your risk for certain types of cancer.

It is not known if STELARA® is safe and effective in children.

It is not known if taking STELARA® for more than two years is safe and effective.

What should I tell my doctor before receiving STELARA®?

Before you receive STELARA®, tell your doctor if you:

- have any of the conditions or symptoms listed in the section "What is the most important information I should know about STELARA®?"
- have recently received or are scheduled to receive an immunization (vaccine). People who take STELARA® should not receive live vaccines. Tell your doctor if anyone in your house needs a vaccine. The viruses used in some types of vaccines can spread to people with a weakened immune system, and can cause serious problems. **You should not receive the BCG vaccine during the one year before taking STELARA® or one year after you stop taking STELARA®.** Non-live vaccinations received while taking STELARA® may not fully protect you from disease.
- are receiving or have received allergy shots, especially for serious allergic reactions. Allergy shots may not work as well for you during treatment with STELARA®. STELARA® may also increase your risk of having an allergic reaction to an allergy shot.
- receive phototherapy for your psoriasis.

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- have any other medical conditions.
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if STELARA® will harm your unborn baby. You and your doctor should decide if you will take STELARA®
- are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed. It is thought that STELARA® passes into your breast milk. You should not breast-feed while taking STELARA® without first talking with your doctor.
- ever had an allergic reaction to STELARA® Ask your doctor if you are not sure.

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Especially tell your doctor if you take:

- other medicines that affect your immune system.
- certain medicines that can affect how your liver breaks down other medicines.

Ask your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure if your medicine is one that is listed above.

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them to show your doctor and pharmacist when you get a new medicine.

How will I receive STELARA®?

- STELARA® is given by injection under the skin (subcutaneous injection).
- STELARA® should only be given by a healthcare provider as directed by your doctor.
- Your doctor will decide the right dose of STELARA® for you and how often you should receive it.
- Be sure to keep all of your scheduled follow-up appointments.

What should I avoid while receiving STELARA®?

You should not receive a live vaccine while taking STELARA® See "What should I tell my doctor before taking STELARA®?"

What are the possible side effects of STELARA®?

STELARA® can increase your chances of having serious side effects.

- See **"What is the most important information I should know about STELARA®?"**
- **Serious Allergic Reactions.** Serious allergic reactions can occur with STELARA® Get medical help right away if you have any of the following symptoms of a serious allergic reaction:
  - feeling faint
  - swelling of your face, eyelids, tongue, or throat
  - trouble breathing, throat tightness
  - chest tightness
  - skin rash

Common side effects of STELARA® include:

- upper respiratory infections
- headache
- tiredness

These are not all of the possible side effects of STELARA® Tell your doctor about any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects.
You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.
You may also report side effects to Centocor Ortho Biotech Inc. at 1-800-457-6399.

General information about STELARA®

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Medication Guide.

This Medication Guide summarizes the most important information about STELARA® If you would like more information, talk with your doctor. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about STELARA® that was written for healthcare professionals.

What are the ingredients in STELARA®?

Active ingredient: ustekinumab

Inactive ingredients: L-histidine, L-histidine monohydrochloride monohydrate, polysorbate 80, and sucrose.

Prefilled Syringe Manufactured by: Centocor Ortho Biotech Inc., Horsham, PA 19044, License No. 1821 at Baxter Pharmaceutical Solutions, Bloomington, IN 47403

Vial Manufactured by: Centocor Ortho Biotech Inc., Horsham, PA 19044, License No. 1821 at Cilag AG, Schaffhausen, Switzerland

Revised October 2010

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The Digest

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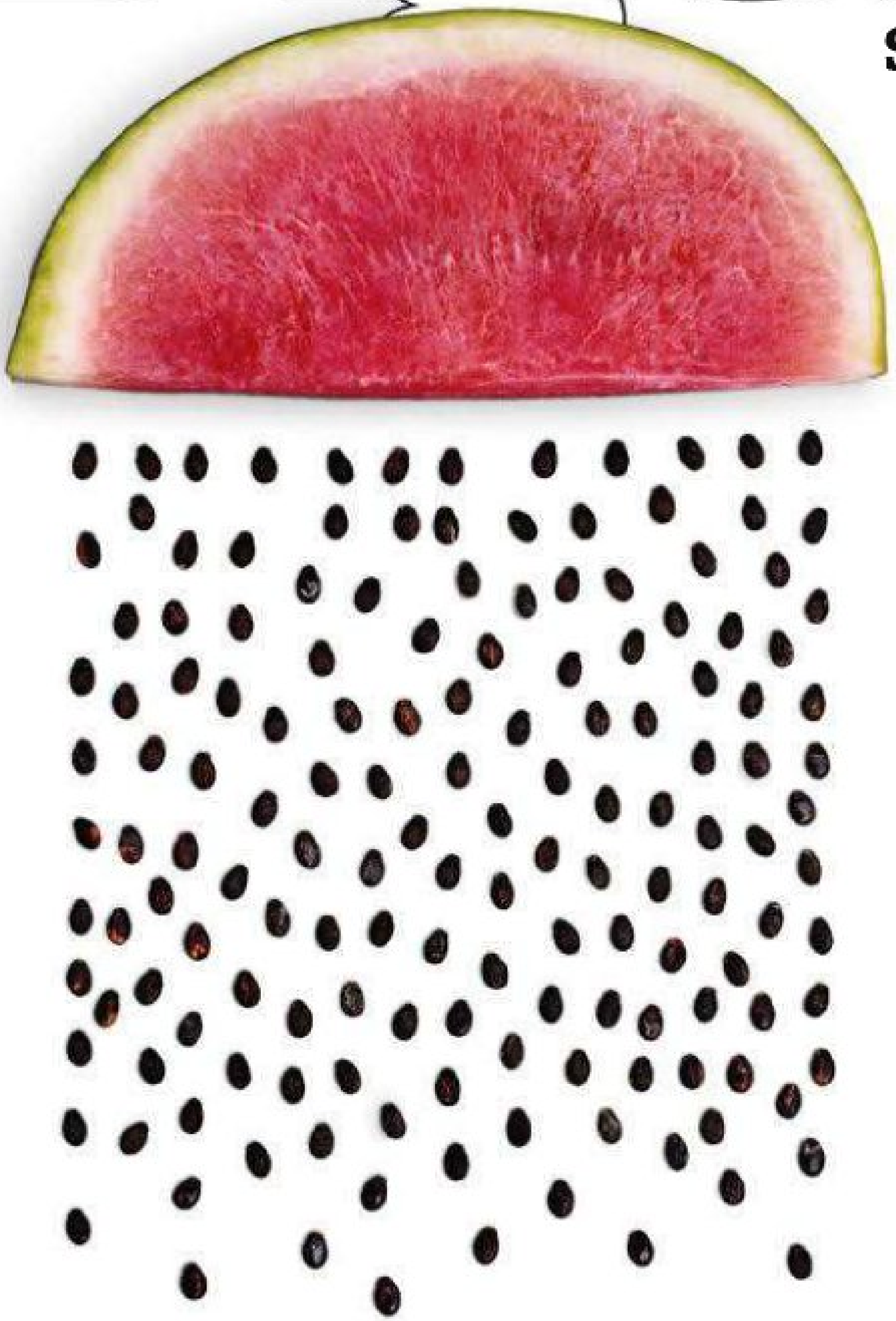

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SARAH ILLENBERGER

Neat Eating

For the obsessive-compulsive and merely tidy alike, there's **thingsorganizedneatly.tumblr.com.** It features crisp photographs of tamed collections: office supplies, shoes, books, clothes, even watermelon seeds. An organized life never looked so simple.

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Pictures *Do* Lie

FROM **oyster.com**

Well, the hotel certainly looks great in the brochure. Wide, deserted beaches, plenty of unoccupied lounge chairs, and a view you'd pay a premium for. But when you arrive, everything looks smaller, busier, less relaxing. Oyster.com has done a little international reconnaissance and compared promotional photos with the grittier reality.

GRAN BAHÍA PRÍNCIPE **Punta Cana, Dominican Republic**

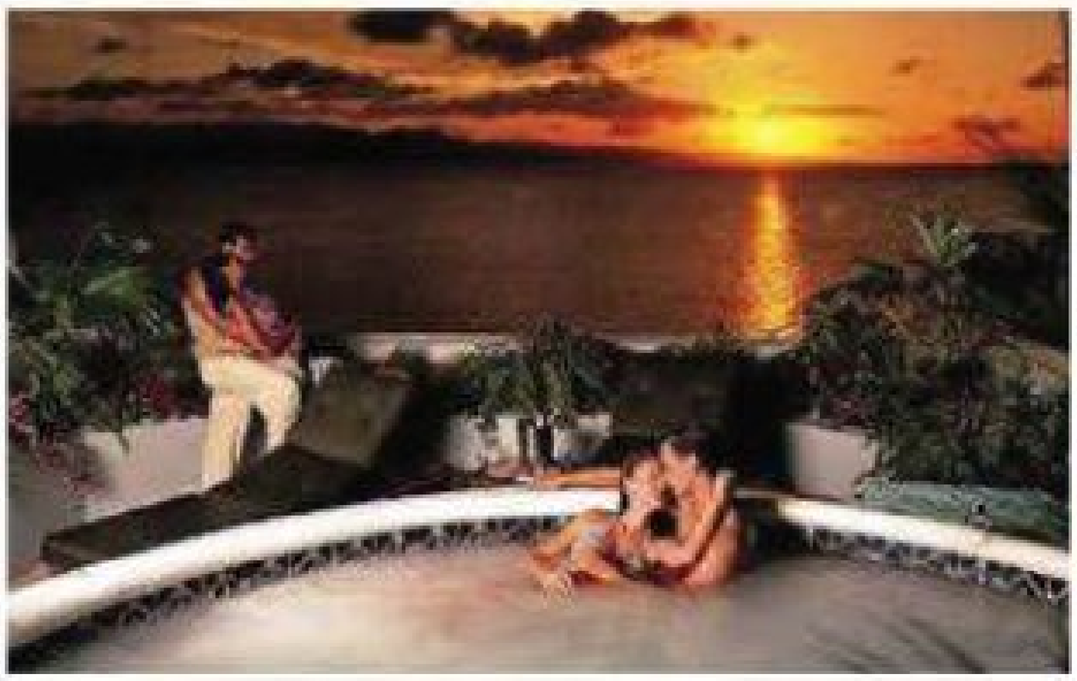
All too often, megaresorts market their beaches as pristine, serene, and romantic; in reality, most are anything but. At the Gran Bahía Príncipe Punta Cana, for example: lots of chairs, lots of people—and *not* deserted.

THE LONDON **West Hollywood, California**

Brochures often depend on sly cropping, elaborate camerawork, and conspicuously missing hotel decor. As we've discovered, hotels don't always deliver on the flora. Consider the case of the mysteriously disappearing plants at the London West Hollywood.

COURTESY OYSTER (10)

HYATT REGENCY **Washington, D.C.**
Proximity to power is valuable currency in the Beltway. But this photo from the hotel website (left) may be taking things too far. The Capitol is actually about a third of a mile from the Hyatt (right). Probably the well-intentioned work of a photographer with a telephoto lens, this shot proves that in Washington, things are not always as they seem.



BREEZES RUNAWAY BAY RESORT **Montego Bay, Jamaica**
There's no denying the hot tub (left) is bright and colorful, but there's something too pristine about this photo from orbitz.com. Our photo (right) tells a different story. Luckily there are two larger pools—and one of the best hotel beaches in Jamaica.

RIU PALACE **Punta Cana, Dominican Republic**
Maybe this beaming, just-married couple led you to book the same pristine white gazebo for your nuptials. But do you really want your wedding crashed by people in swimwear? (Nothing says elegance like an uninvited onlooker in a leopard-print sarong.)

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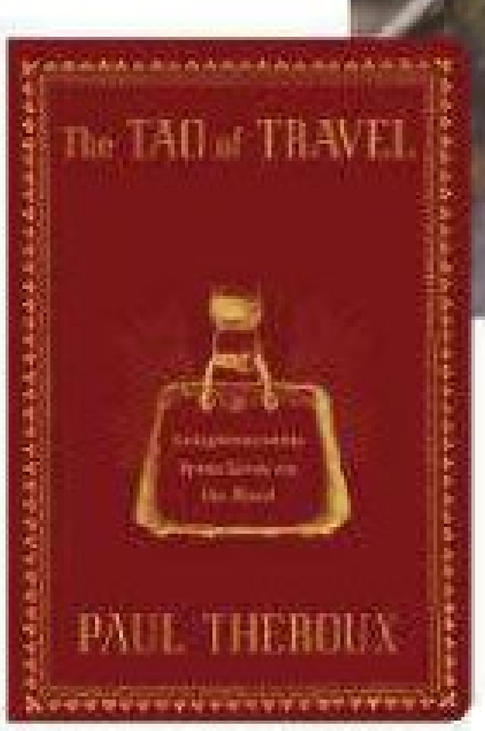
ATTITUDE ADJUSTMENT

Why Leave Home?

Writer Paul Theroux reveals two of the countless epiphanies he's had on his travels throughout the world



FROM ***The Tao of Travel: Enlightenments from Lives on the Road*** **(Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, $25)**

ONE

I was in Palermo and had spent the last of my money on a ticket to New York aboard the *Queen Frederica*. This was in September 1963; I was going into the Peace Corps, training for a post in Africa. The farewell party my Italian friends gave me on the night of departure went on so long that when we got to the port, a Sicilian band was playing "Anchors Aweigh" and the *Queen Frederica* had just left the quayside. In that moment, I lost all my vitality.

My friends bought me an air ticket to Naples so that I could catch up to the ship there the next day. Just before I boarded the plane, an airline official said I had not paid my departure tax. I told him I had no money.

A man behind me in a brown suit and brown Borsalino said, "Here. You need some money?" and handed me $20.

That solved the problem. I said, "I'd like to pay you back."

The man shrugged. He said, "I'll probably see you again. The world's a small place."

TWO

Just before Independence Day in 1964, when Nyasaland became Malawi, the minister of education, Masauko

COURTESY WILLIAM FURNISS

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Chipembere, planted a tree at the school where I was teaching in the south of the country. Soon after this, he conspired to depose the prime minister, Dr. Hastings Banda. But Chipembere himself was driven out.

Time passed, and when I heard that Chipembere had died in Los Angeles ("in exile," as a CIA pensioner), I thought of the little tree he had shoveled into the ground. Twenty-five years after I'd left the school, I traveled back to Malawi. Two things struck me about the country: Most of the trees had been cut down—for fuel—and no one rode a bicycle anymore. Most buildings were decrepit too. Dr. Banda was still in power.

It took me a week to travel to my old school. It was larger now but ruinous, with broken windows and splintered desks. The students seemed unpleasant. The headmaster was rude to me. The library had no books.

The tree was big and green, almost 40 feet high.

THE ESSENTIAL TAO OF TRAVEL

1) Leave home.
2) Go alone.
3) Travel light.
4) Bring a map.
5) Go by land.
6) Walk across a national frontier.
7) Keep a journal.
8) Read a novel that has no relation to the place you're in.
9) If you must bring a cell phone, avoid using it.
10) Make a friend.

Paul Theroux

STRATEGY

Money Savers Slept Here

Three ways to economize on lodging wherever you go

1 Instead of a hotel, consider someone's futon, extra room, or home. Airbnb.com has become a go-to site for short-term rentals in private homes. "Just as YouTube made stars of people, we're making stars of people's spaces," co-founder Brian Chesky tells *Forbes*. The site encourages lots of photos and owner information to help travelers envision exactly what they're getting. *Money* magazine also recommends homeaway.com for its large, searchable inventory and vacationrentals.com for last-minute lodgings for less. Look for recent photos and customer testimonials, says *Time*.

2 Consider swapping homes. Homeexchange.com is the site to visit. The trick, of course, is finding people who want to stay in your house while you stay in theirs.

3 Consider a hostel. They're not just for backpacking college kids anymore, says Timothy R. Smith in the *Washington Post*. He recently stayed at four New York City hostels ($15 to $60 a night, private room with shared bath). "Some were good, some less so. But," he writes, "I found no bedbugs, creeps, or disembodied heads."

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THE CHECKLIST

How to Choose a Suitable Suitcase

Traveling anywhere in 2011 is hard enough. Do we really need the drama of a clinkety-clanky cardboard box on recalcitrant wheels trailing drunkenly behind us all the way to Terminal Z? Holly E. Thomas of the *Washington Post* reveals how to buy a sleeker set of wheels.

- Pick a 22-inch carry-on for U.S. travel. International travelers are safer with a 20-inch.
- Ballistic nylon trumps canvas, polyester, and even leather.
- Wheels should be hard rubber and have ball bearings.
- Shoulder straps shouldn't slip. Handles should go up and down with one hand.
- Wendy Perrin of *Condé Nast Traveler* tells Thomas that she avoids highly compartmentalized carry-ons: "It's best for me to have vast open space that I can fill however I want." A bag with compartments "wasn't necessarily designed with my specific needs in mind."
- "Off" colors are usually less expensive and easier to find on a luggage carousel.

NOTABLE QUOTE

> "When y'all talk, it sounds like your words are smiling."
>
> **Woman from El Paso, on the speech of North Carolinians, in the *Oxford American***

MARTIN POOLE/GETTY IMAGES

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*Among gastroenterologists who recommended a brand of probiotic in a Wolters Kluwer 2010 survey.

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FAQ About Your BBQ

Add flavor, save time, and eat better with these grilling shortcuts

BY LAUREN GNIAZDOWSKI

My grill is still coated with the remnants of last Labor Day's cook-out. What do I do?

No one wants to taste the sirloin steaks of yesteryear, and you can't depend on the fire to burn off all the residue. Brillo away your mistakes, or, if your grilling surface has rusted, order a replacement from the manufacturer. From now on, use a stiff-bristled grill brush before, during, and after cooking. That way, meat and fish won't stick—and you'll get those perfect grill marks on every piece. If you don't have a brush, crumple up a piece of aluminum foil, grip it with tongs, and then scrub the grill grate clean.

What's the easiest way to fire up a charcoal grill?

Buy a chimney starter, one of those big cylinders that usually have a wooden handle. Get

CORBIS

the largest one you can find. The more coals you light, the more things you can cook at once. Even better: no nasty lighter fluid.

Okay, the grill is clean, but the food still sticks.

Follow the advice of grilling guru, author, and TV chef Steven Raichlen, who takes a paper towel dipped in vegetable oil with a pair of tongs and wipes oil onto the hot grate first, reports *Esquire*. Or do what Israeli grill masters do: Spear half an onion on a barbecue fork, dip the onion in oil, and rub it on the grate.

Can I marinate, rub, and baste to boost the flavor?

Yes, and almost any recipe you follow indoors will work outdoors. One bonus of marinades with rosemary: The herb's antioxidants help eliminate carcinogens in some grilled beef.

What do I put on a skewer?

Just about anything. Chef and author Chris Schlesinger cuts vegetables into large chunks, he tells the *New York Times*, so they're seared on the outside but don't go mushy on the inside. And Raichlen gets creative: Instead of using metal or bamboo skewers, he tells *Esquire*, he skewers lamb on fresh rosemary, pork or peaches on cinnamon sticks, and chicken, >>

THE GEAR

Grill Gadgets

New tools to save time and add taste

Cuisinart OmniPanel
$29.99, cuisinart.com
If you're tired of the same old cookout fare, try this grill panel to cook up something new. Use the cedar plank to grill fish and the pizza stone to create homemade versions.

Biobrush $18.99, originalbiobrush.com
This grill brush is made of bamboo, agave, and palm, yet it's strong enough to power through baked-on grime.

Fire Wire Flexible Grilling Skewers $19.95 for a set of four, williams-sonoma.com
This cable-style skewer can accommodate more meat and vegetables than a traditional one. And it fits on the grill better too.

Xtrema Open Skillet
$99.99, ceramcor.com
Use this durable ceramic skillet right on the grill instead of scurrying back and forth to the kitchen stove. The no-scratch, nontoxic surface is also worry-free. *L. G.*

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FloridaEF.com

shrimp, or swordfish on lemongrass stalks.

What's an easy way to grill fish?

Those delicate fillets need special attention. Schlesinger starts with a clean, hot grill, then lightly oils the fillet. After placing it on the grill, he lets it cook a few minutes before turning it—only once. If you're especially nervous, you can always use a perforated (and oiled) grill pan to keep expensive fillets from crumbling and falling through the grate and onto the coals. Try cooking fish on an aromatic cedar plank (presoaked, of course) to add more smoky tang.

Do people who grill fruit just have too much time on their hands?

Not at all. Think pineapples, bananas, cantaloupes, oranges, and peaches. In *Eat like a Man* (Chronicle, $30), contributor John Mariani suggests cutting fruit in half, brushing it with melted butter, sprinkling it with brown sugar if you want, and then grilling. "There are few tastier desserts than grilled fruit," he says, "and somehow, it always surprises people."

Do I really want to make pizza on the grill?

Yes. Yes, you do. Making pizza on the grill is surprisingly easy if you follow this tip from thekitchn.com: Top the pizza *after* you've put the dough on the grill. Cook it for just a few minutes to give it a wood-fired flavor, flip it over, and then top it. A slightly thicker crust also makes for better grilled pizza.

When does the barbecue sauce go on?

Wait until the last ten or 15 minutes of cooking. Sugar in the sauce can blacken and char if heated too long.

A rare steak feels "squishy," a medium steak feels "springy," and a well-done one feels "taut."

How can I tell when food is done without cutting into it?

Resist carving into that beautiful steak or juicy chicken breast, and invest in a good meat thermometer with markings that tell when different types of meat are done. Insert it into the thickest portion, avoiding bones, to test for doneness.

Is there an easier way?

All you need is your own two hands. According to

GO FIGURE

555,000,000

cupcakes were eaten nationwide between February 2009 and February 2010

Source: chicagotribune.com

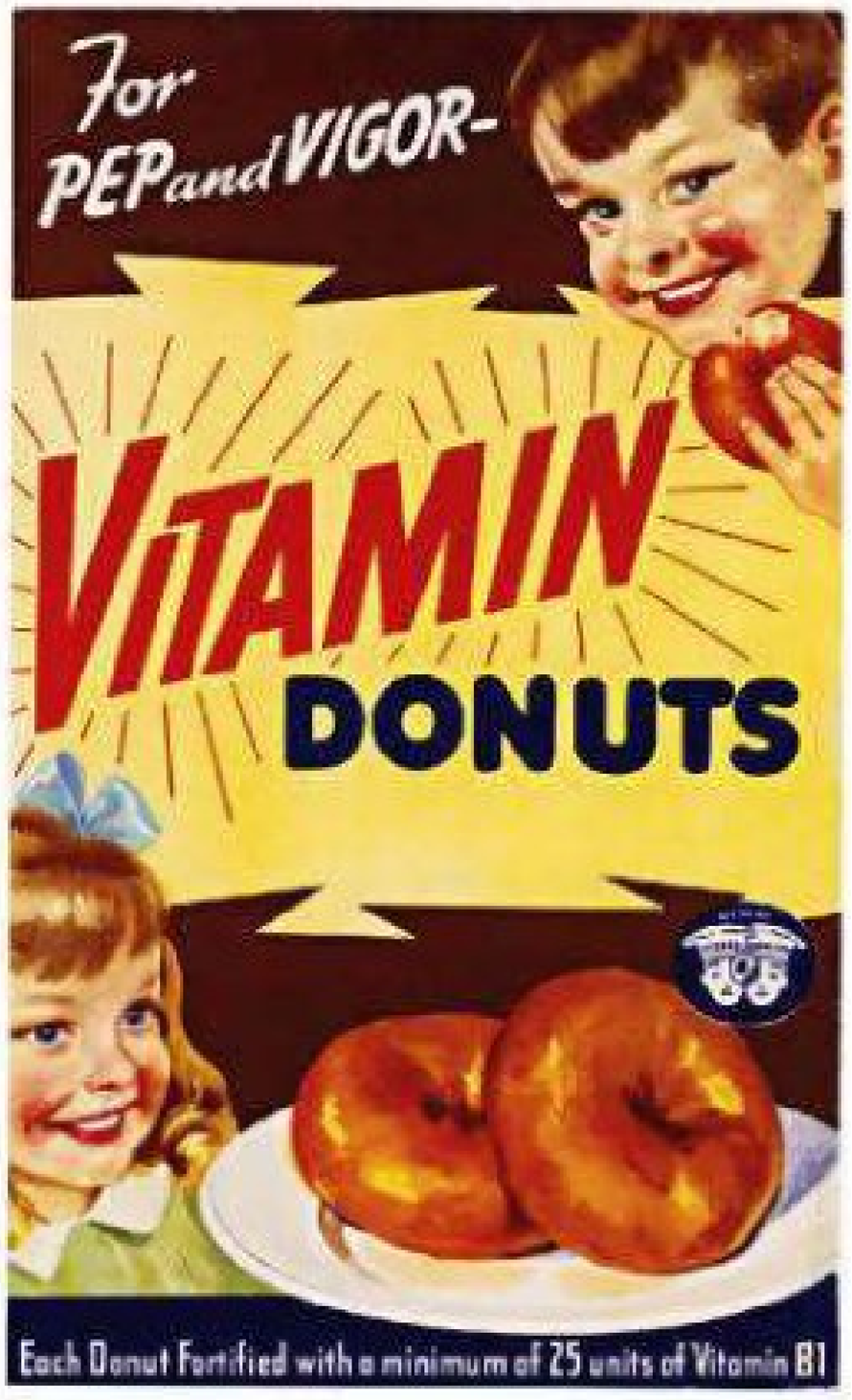
fiordiegg.com

celebrity chef Bobby Flay, the simplest way to test the food is to poke it with your finger. Since meat becomes firmer as it cooks, a rare steak feels "squishy," a medium steak feels "springy," and a well-done steak feels "taut." Practice makes perfect, so try it with family first and avoid competitive Guests Who Grill judging you over your shoulder and behind your back.

Other sources: cooksillustrated.com, bhg.com, esquire.com, epicurious.com, nytimes.com, *Fire It Up: 400 Recipes for Grilling Everything* (Chronicle, $24.95), bobbyflay.com, *GQ*.

VISUAL FEAST

A Doughnut a Day ...



Seventy years ago, doughnuts were touted as the broccoli of their day—a morale-boosting delivery system for daily vitamins during World War II. The exhibit *What's Cooking, Uncle Sam?* features White House menus, good old government propaganda, and more. It's at the National Archives in Washington, D.C., starting June 10.

THE LIST

5 ESSENTIAL SPICES • FROM *Food & Wine*

CORIANDER
Use along with salt and pepper for seasoning everything from roasted chicken to grilled vegetables.

CUMIN
Mix with ginger and garlic to add Indian flavor, with oregano and cilantro to add Mexican flavor.

CINNAMON
Add to pancakes and baked goods, or blend with cumin and coriander to make an exotic spice rub.

SMOKED PAPRIKA
Give vegetarian dishes a meaty taste, or blend with ketchup to serve on grilled burgers.

CHILE FLAKES
Sprinkle over sautéed greens, pasta, and nut mixes. Use in place of dried chiles in Asian cooking.

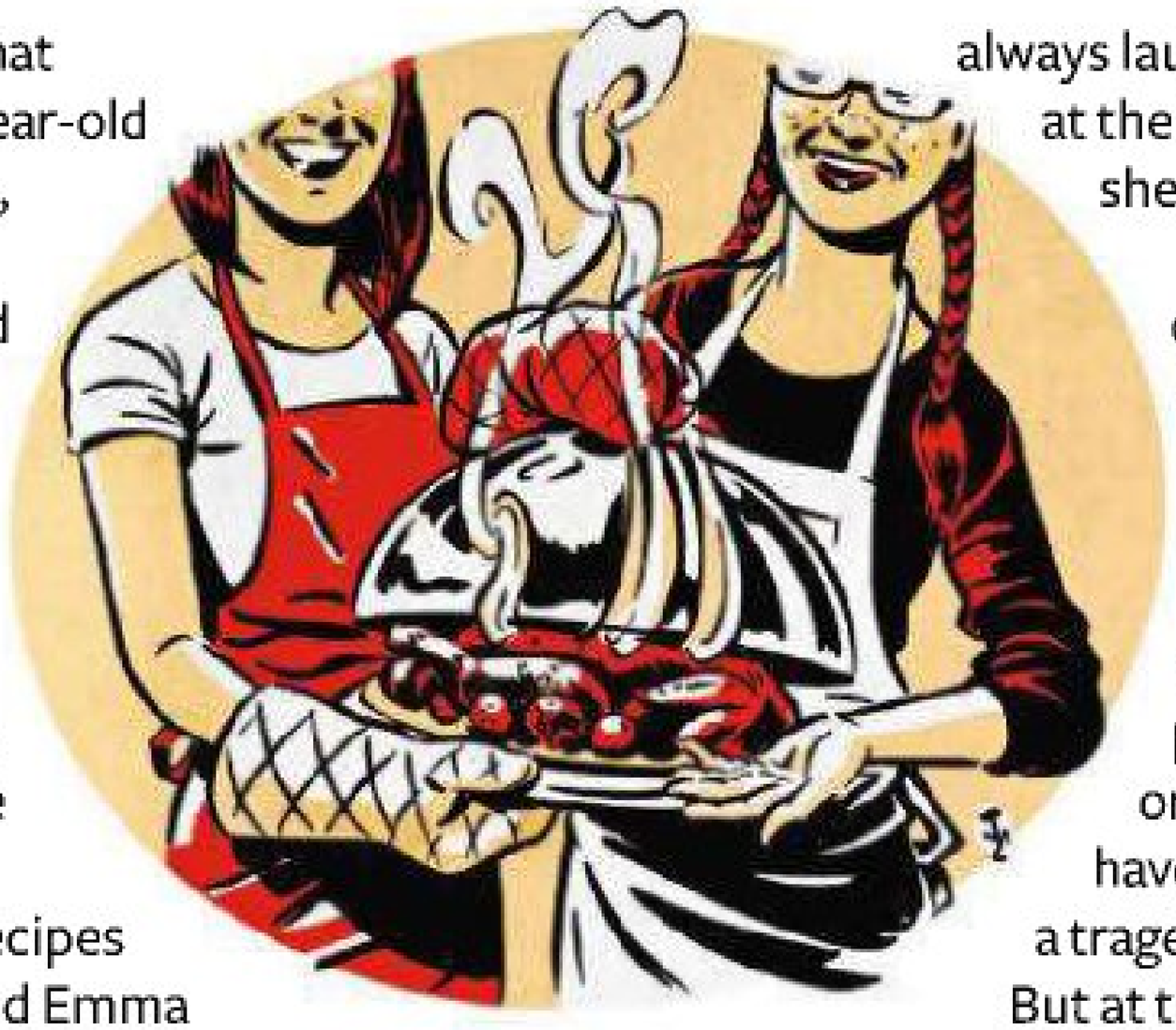
FROM TOP: COURTESY NATIONAL ARCHIVES, RECORDS OF THE AGRICULTURAL MARKETING SERVICE; GETTY (5)

MINI EXCERPT

Let's Put on a Meal!

Writer Jack Hitt lets his daughter loose in the kitchen

FROM ***Man with a Pan: Men Who Cook for Their Families*** **(Algonquin, $15.95)**



One day, not all that long ago, my 12-year-old daughter, Yancey, announced that she and her friend Emma would cook dinner. I was having some friends over and had already put together my own menu. But no, she insisted, waving photocopies of recipes in my face. She and Emma would do it. All I had to do was drive them to the store. Once I got them going, they shooed me from the kitchen, and thus began an afternoon that quickly swelled into family legend.

This production involved putting up a rampart of chairs to keep out unwanted spectators. The entire Saturday afternoon took on that feeling of an earlier time when the kids would seal off a room and announce they were practicing to put on a play for the adults. The kids were trying to mimic the world as they knew it—the plot of a bedtime story or some recent event that struck them as crucial in their lives. What made them especially entertaining was the kindly recognition of just how bad they were at acting and writing dialogue and improvising. The pleasure for the parents and the kids was always laughing generously at the boffo display of sheer ineptitude.

Translate this comedy to a room full of fire, sharp knives, whole chickens, and jumbo canisters of (redundantly purchased) Costco oregano, and you have the makings of a tragedy, if not a fiasco. But at the beginning of the evening, the girls brought out a brilliant four-course meal made from scratch: gazpacho salad, chicken-barley soup, pork loin, chocolate mousse. When Yancey brought in the gazpacho salad, the room reacted to the bright array of color nestled in the Bibb lettuce. She said proudly, "Look how we plated it!"

We all thought, Way too much Food Network for this kid. But that wasn't it. The girls didn't watch the Food Network. If anything, that whole *Iron Chef* vocabulary has simply permeated our culture, creating a generation with an easy ability to use *savory* and *umami* in a sentence ... I realized that the story of the generation raised in the post-feminist era—my generation—was one that could be told as a history of a single room, the modern kitchen.

ILLUSTRATED BY JONATHAN CARLSON

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Bring back the fun.

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Mediterranean Back Ribs
with Pomegranate Sauce

INGREDIENTS

5 lbs. back ribs
1 tbsp. kosher salt
1 tsp. fresh ground black pepper
16 oz. bottle 100% pomegranate juice*
⅔ c. ketchup
1 tbsp. molasses
1 tbsp. soy sauce
2 scallions, white and green parts, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced

DIRECTIONS

Season ribs with salt and pepper. Charcoal: prepare an indirect medium-hot fire with drip pan in the center. Gas: heat grill to medium and turn off burners directly below where ribs will go. Lightly oil cooking grate. Place ribs over indirect heat (over drip pan or unlit burner). Close grill hood and cook until ribs are tender, about 1 ½ to 2 hours. (If using charcoal, add more charcoal briquettes to fire, if necessary, to maintain grill temperature of about 325-350° F.)

Meanwhile, bring pomegranate juice to a boil in a medium saucepan over high heat. Boil until thickened and reduced to ⅓ cup, about 15 minutes. Stir in ketchup, molasses, soy sauce, scallions and garlic. Bring to a simmer. Cook, stirring often, until slightly thickened, about 5 minutes.

During last 20 minutes of cooking ribs, baste ribs with sauce. Ribs are done when meat pulls away from the bone.

*May substitute with ⅓ c. red currant jelly and 1 tbsp. cider vinegar.

Serves 6 (4-rib slab per serving)

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RECIPE

Chocolate-Peanut Spread ("Peanutella")

Deb Perelman, the clever cook behind the Smitten Kitchen blog, creates her version of Nutella

FROM **smittenkitchen.com**

Yields about 1¾ cups

- **2 cups raw peanuts, shelled and skinned**
- **½ cup dark, rich unsweetened cocoa powder**
- **1¼ cups powdered sugar**
- **¼ tsp. salt, plus more to taste**
- **3 tbs. peanut oil**

1. Heat oven to 400° F. Spread peanuts evenly on cookie sheet. Roast until they darken, about 10 minutes, rattling them around a bit halfway through so they toast evenly. (If unable to find raw peanuts, toast for 5 minutes to deepen flavor.)
2. Transfer peanuts to food processor and grind for about 5 minutes. They'll become a paste and, finally, they'll liquefy. Scrape down sides as needed.
3. Add cocoa, sugar, salt, and 2 tbs. oil to food processor and continue to process until well blended, about 1 minute. Add more salt if needed. Add remaining oil if consistency seems too thick.
4. Store in refrigerator for up to a week in covered container. When fully chilled, it will become thick like peanut butter.

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Be amazing

Mediterranean Back Ribs
with Pomegranate Sauce

Fire up the grill and get ready for a taste sensation. These pork back ribs are sweet, saucy and – yes – amazing. Discover your next great grilling idea at PorkBeInspired.com

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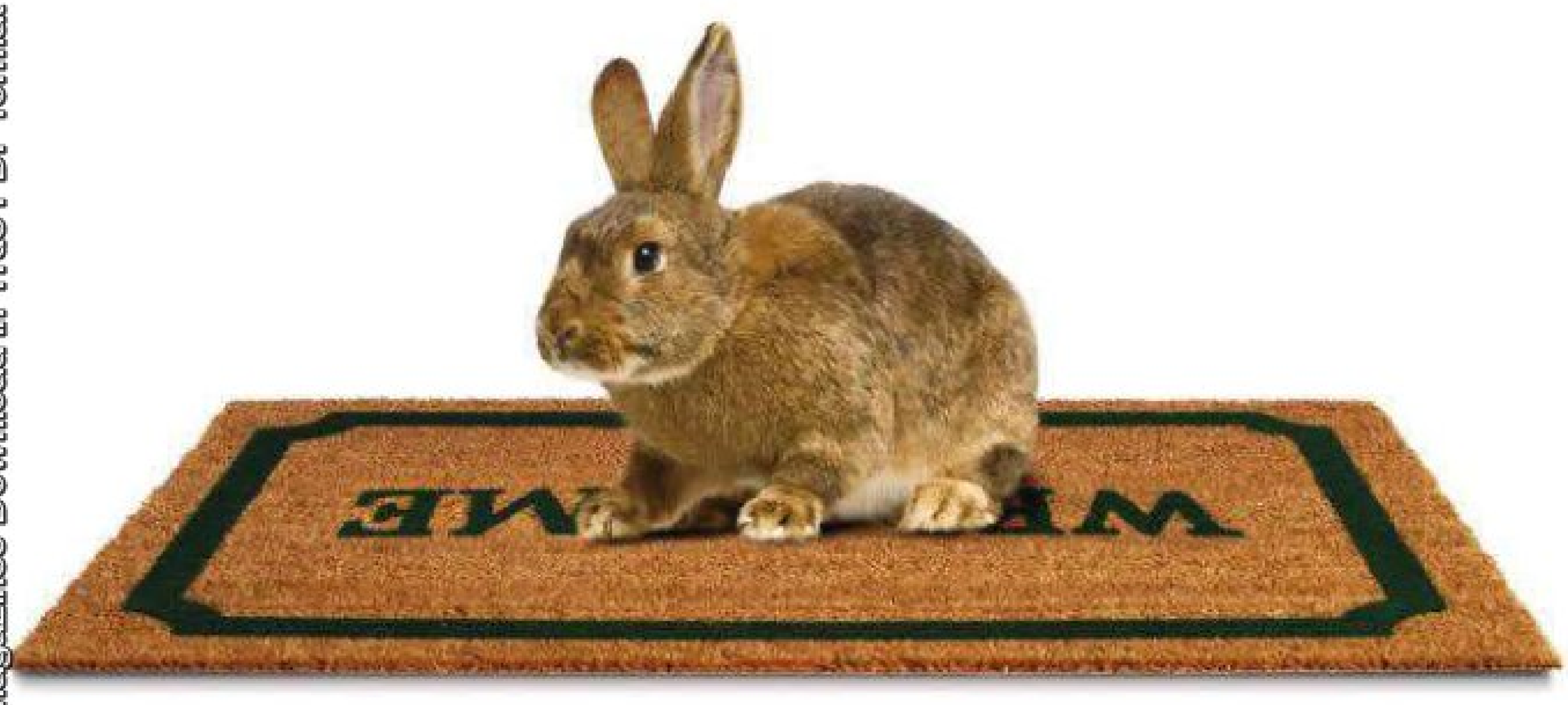
Nature has something to tell you.



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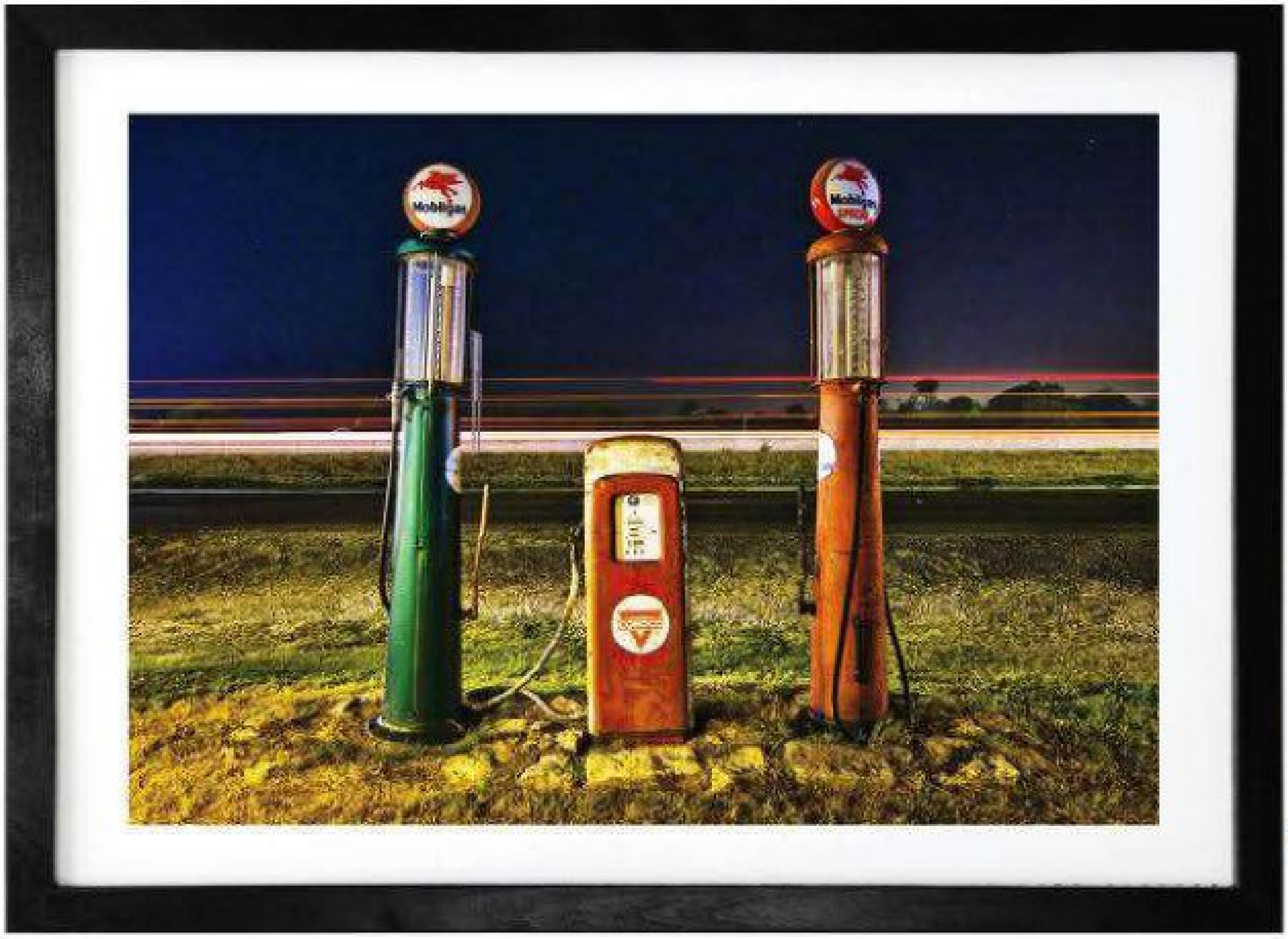
Hang It Up

How to fill blank walls with inexpensive (and good!) paintings, prints, and photographs



COURTESY NOEL KERNS; FRAME: CORBIS

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$75 Framed photograph by Noel Kerns, 11 by 14 inches, artstar.com

One of the thrilling things the Internet has given mere mouse-wielding mortals is access to a huge range of affordable art. "The traditional art world may have spent centuries trying to convince us there's a direct correlation between price and taste," writes Maria Popova on brain pickings.org, but now the Web is shaking things up. In other words, you don't have to be a Medici or a Microsoft co-founder to buy a masterpiece. These >>

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sites offer great art at great prices.

20x200.com

This site virtually invented the online model of selling limited-edition, budget-friendly works by emerging artists to novice collectors. Look for a new photograph and a new work on paper twice a week, at prices as low as $20.

Aceditions.com

The idea here is to cut out the middleman and sell work from top artists, both established (like Eric Fischl, Sally Mann, and Chuck Close) and little known, without the gallery markup. "The best art site around, by far," blurbs Neil Vogel, CEO of the Webby Awards. Prices start at $50.

Artoftheprint.com

This site sells everything from Old Master engravings to antique maps and vintage advertising posters. The pages are a bit hard to navigate, but the reward is over 3,000 pieces of art, most under $1,000.

Artstar.com

Limited-edition prints and original works by over 30 artists are offered here, and an online tool lets you view your choices hanging in a virtual room ($25 to $250 for prints; $300 and up for original art).

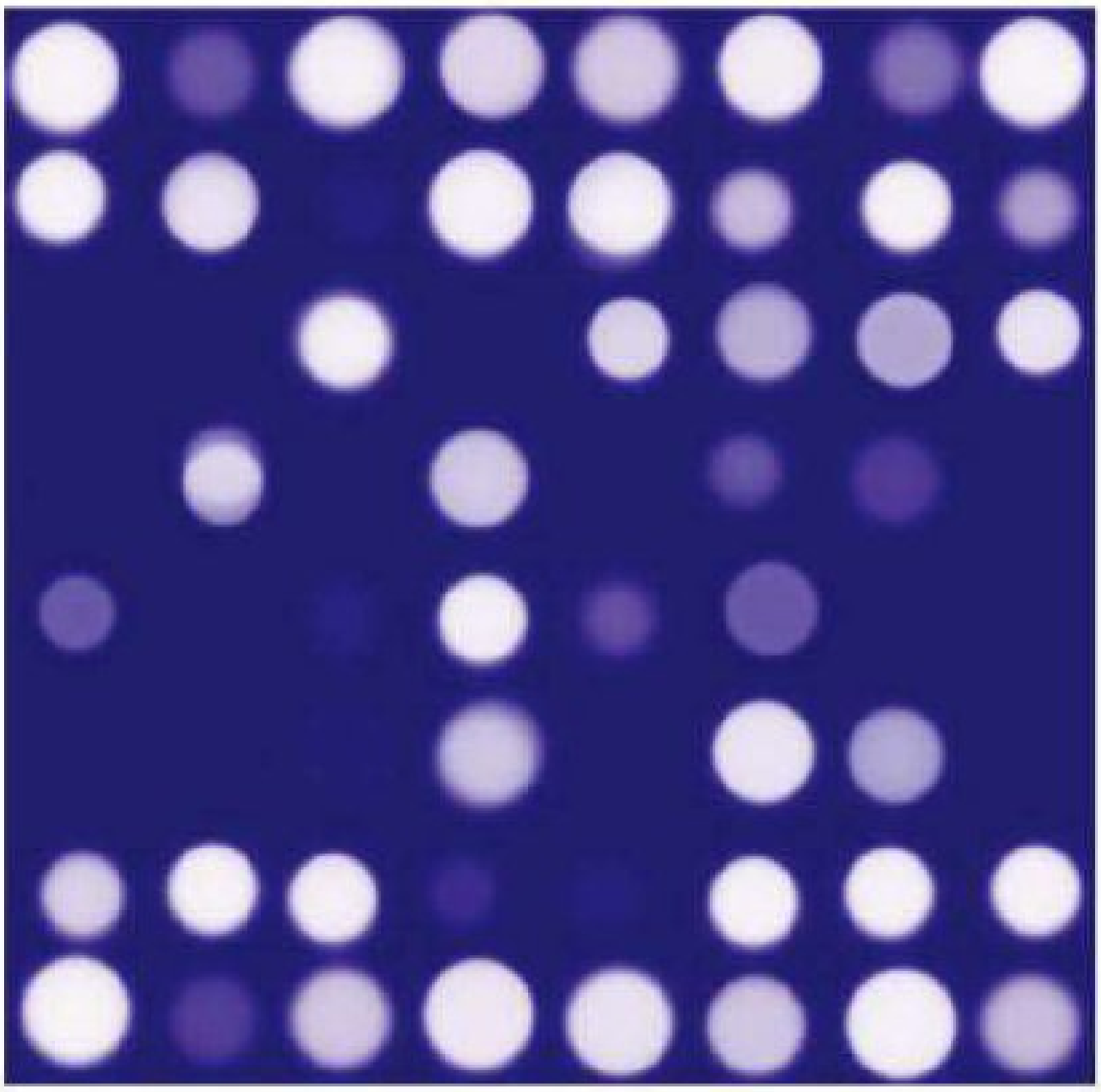
Circuitgallery.com

By offering photographs, digital art, and prints in larger-than-average editions of 500, this gallery keeps costs down: Prices are $30 for an eight-by-ten-inch print, $60 for one that's 11 by 14 inches, and $120 for one that's 16 by 20 inches, regardless of the work. The site is relatively new, so its stable of artists is small (but growing).

Exhibitiona.com

You have to be a member to buy the ready-to-hang, stretched-canvas prints by top contemporary artists (from $100 to $600 or so). The mostly digital prints are often sold in limited-time open editions—that is, whatever is purchased during the

$30 **Print by Roger Sayre, 8 by 8 inches, circuitgallery.com**



COURTESY ROGER SAYRE/CIRCUIT GALLERY

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online sale period (usually four weeks) determines the number in the edition.

Eyestorm.com

New, limited-edition contemporary art and photography from fresh faces and famed artists alike go for $72 to over $40,000 (prices are in pound sterling).

Society6.com

Any artist can upload his or her work for viewers to buy and vote on, with the most popular work appearing on the home page. No bells or whistles here, just the art and the chance to promote and/or own it, generally for $20 to $60.

Theworkingproof.com

All the limited-edition prints here cost under $100, and 15 percent of the proceeds from each sale is donated to a charity of the artist's choice. A new print is released every week.

Tinyshowcase.com

The prints sold here—a new one is added every week—are by up-and-comers, and many measure no bigger than a piece of typing paper. Which means, as the owners say, you get to own "[a] piece of artwork for around the same price as a CD, book, or record." Plus, a percentage of each sale goes to a charity chosen by the artist.

Zatista.com

This site sells original drawings, paintings, and photography at prices that start below $250. Its Art Explorer tool lets you click on works you like and then sends you suggestions. An Art 101 section teaches you the basics on everything from how to shop for art to how to frame and hang it.

$395 Original lithograph (1870), 13.5 by 6.75 inches, artoftheprint.com

COURTESY ART OF THE PRINT

Sources: *New York Times, Real Simple,* brainpickings.org

NOTABLE QUOTE

"The love of gardening is a seed that once sown never dies."

Garden designer Gertrude Jekyll, in *Gertrude Jekyll and the Country House Garden* by Judith B. Tankard (Rizzoli, $45)

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JUST IN CASE

A NEW BREED OF SCARECROWS

BY JUSTIN CHAN AND RACHEL HALPERN

In the battle of man against nature, nature seems to have the upper hoof, wing, and claw. In 2009, in one Connecticut county alone, deer overpopulation cost residents an estimated $124 million in landscaping and environmental damage, or an average of $619 per household. Meanwhile, since 1990 the Canada goose population has quadrupled to some four million today, with each of those birds eating up to four pounds of grass a day (and leaving behind half of that in droppings). Add in ducks, raccoons, and rabbits, and it's bad news for homeowners, who spend around $40 billion per year to maintain and improve their yards. But with these modern scarecrows, there's hope.

● TO FRIGHTEN CROWS, PIGEONS, GULLS, OTHER FLYING NUISANCES

The decoy: Screech Owl ($120, Birdbusters) has a photo cell that activates four sounds—including those of predators—from a rotating base.
Why consider it: Birds, while not brainiacs, tend to dislike the owl's sounds.

● GEESE, DUCKS, SMALL ANIMALS

The decoy: Gator Guard ($69, Bird-X), a model of an alligator head with mirrored eyes that flash in the light, is specifically designed for a pond.
Why consider it: This decoy bobs in water, better mimicking an actual predator.

● CROWS, PIGEONS, SQUIRRELS, SNAKES

The decoy: Hawk Decoy ($20, Bird-B-Gone) is a genuine-looking bird of prey that doesn't do much more than sit and stare.
Why consider it: Hawks are daytime predators, so decoys that resemble them may

COURTESY BIRD-X

Release: StoreMags & FantaMag

be more effective than owls (which prey may not see at night and won't recognize as a predator during the day).

● **WOODPECKERS**

The decoy: Birds-Away Attack Spider ($15, attackspider.com). This furry battery-operated, sound-activated gizmo looks a bit like a Halloween prop: It drops down on an 18-inch string while making a loud noise, then climbs back up.

Why consider it: The notion of a woodpecker trying to find insects in your house's siding may just be worth the $15 outlay.

● **GEESE AND OTHER BIRDS, SQUIRRELS, RABBITS, SKUNKS**

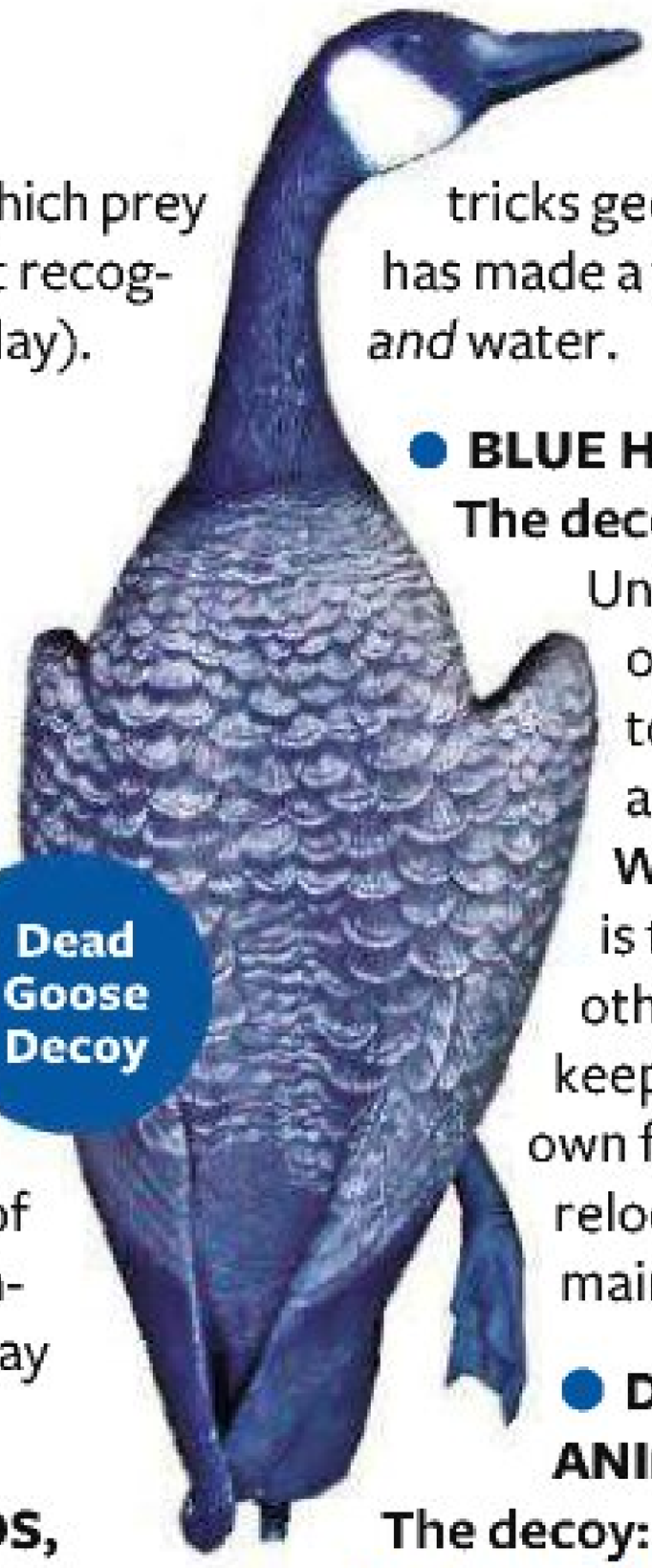
The decoy: 3D-Coyote ($62, Bird-X). Made of molded plastic with a furry tail, this decoy is attached to a stake that allows you to move it around your lawn.

Why consider it: It looks convincing from every angle, and since bird vision is quite strong, the Coyote can theoretically be more effective than sound machines at long ranges.

● **GEESE**

The decoy: Dead Goose Decoy ($110 for two, Birdbusters) is a realistic replica posed to look as if it died a gruesome death.

Why consider it: Unlike standard decoys, this one tricks geese into thinking a predator has made a fresh kill, and it works on land *and* water.



● **BLUE HERONS**

The decoy: Blue Heron Decoy ($30, United Aquatics) is a lawn-ornament-like statue designed to keep real herons from koi and other fish ponds.

Why consider it: The theory is that herons respect one another's hunting territory and will keep flying if they see one of their own feeding. Note: You'll need to relocate the decoy frequently to maintain its effectiveness.

● **DEER, DOGS, OTHER ANIMALS**

The decoy: Scarecrow Motion-Activated Animal Deterrent ($89, Contech). This hooks up to a garden hose, uses a motion detector to sense animals, and then emits a pressurized water jet and a loud sound to shoo them away.

Why consider it: The jet can spray up to 35 feet, though critters may eventually outsmart it.

● **STARLINGS, OTHER FRUIT-EATING BIRDS, SQUIRRELS, GULLS**

The decoy: Inflatable Snake ($10, Dalen).

Why consider it: Though this fake six-foot snake is about as primitive as decoys get, the manufacturer claims it helps reduce fruit-tree and vegetable-crop losses by up to 50 percent.

FROM TOP: COURTESY BIRDBUSTERS; COURTESY CONTECH

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TIME-SAVERS

Haul, Mulch, and Hose: 3 Tricks

FROM *Family Handyman*

If you use your wheelbarrow to haul tree limbs, lumber, or yard tools, you may be struggling to keep it balanced when it's full. Use a couple of ordinary bungee cords to keep everything tucked in: Simply stretch them over the top of the load and hook them under the lip.

The best way to protect delicate seedlings while you mulch is to cover each new plant with a nursery pot once they're all in the ground. Distribute the mulch around the pots (left) without worrying about decapitating or crushing an expensive plant.

Who hasn't had a soaker hose bunch and twist and send water everywhere? A cheap, easy way to make it stay put: Start with an ordinary plastic coat hanger. Cut the ends off at an angle so that you wind up with what looks roughly like two four-inch-high croquet wickets. Now place each over a section of the hose several feet apart and pound the pieces into the ground. Voilà! No more fire hose.

COURTESY TOM FENENGA/*FAMILY HANDYMAN*

MyBONIVA is a free program* that gives you tips from Sally, ideas, and support to help manage your postmenopausal osteoporosis. You'll get:

- One month of BONIVA free.*
- Sally Field's tips on managing your postmenopausal osteoporosis and keeping your bones strong.
- Helpful monthly reminders to take your BONIVA, delivered by phone, e-mail, or mail.
- Quarterly newsletters filled with bone-strengthening exercises and simple, delicious recipes.

*Subject to eligibility. You must be 18 years of age or older to join MyBONIVA. The free trial offer is limited to one per patient. MyBONIVA is a registered trademark of Roche Therapeutics Inc.

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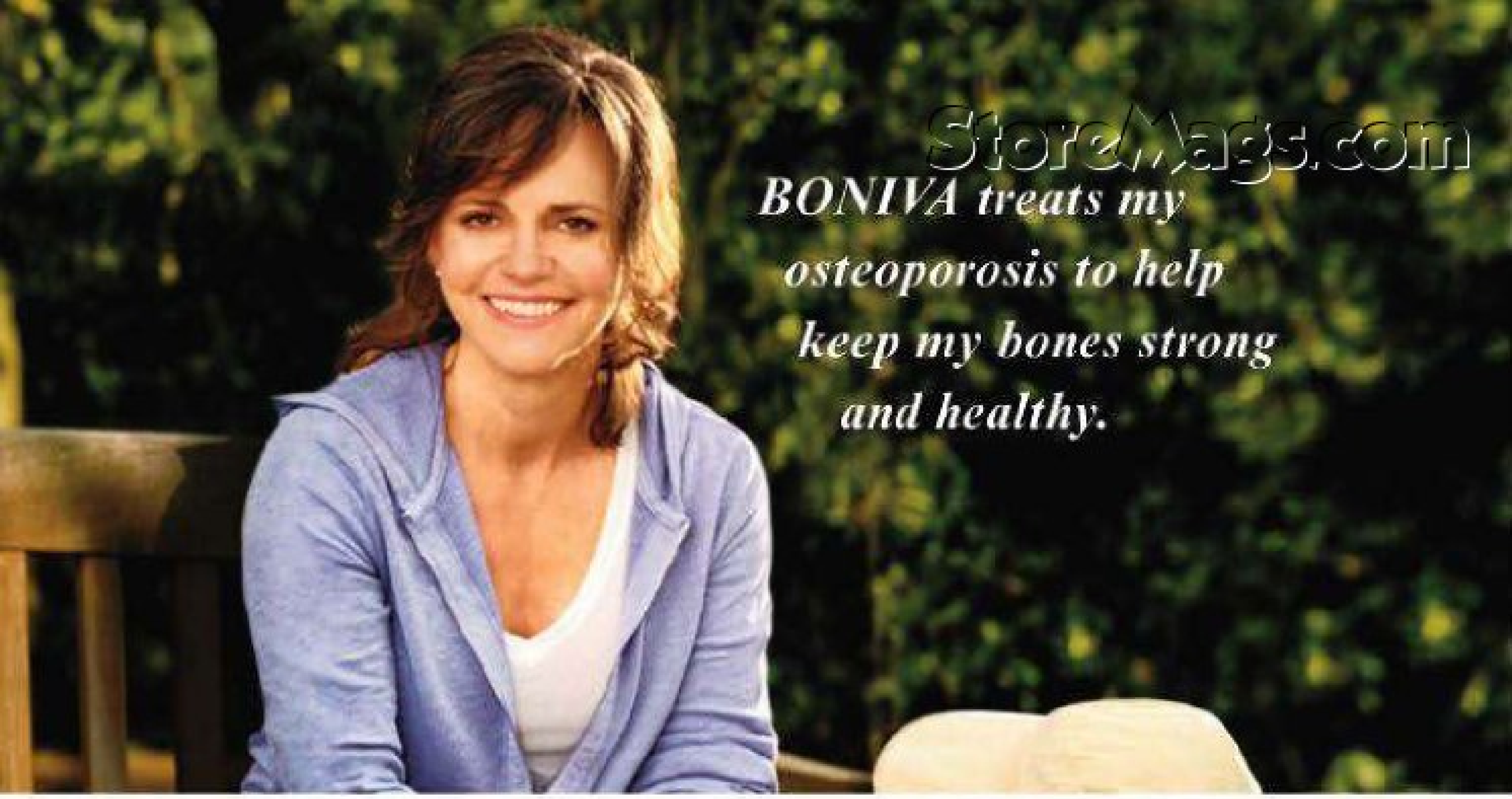

You want to do all you can to fight postmenopausal osteoporosis, and vitamin D, exercise, and calcium-rich foods can help. But they may not be enough to keep your bones strong. Ask your doctor if once-monthly BONIVA can help you do more. BONIVA may increase bone mass to help women have stronger, healthier bones.

Ask your doctor if BONIVA is right for you.

BONIVA is a prescription medicine used to treat or prevent osteoporosis in women after menopause. BONIVA helps increase bone mass and helps reduce the chance of having a spinal fracture (break). It is not known how long BONIVA works for the treatment and prevention of osteoporosis. You should see your doctor regularly to determine if BONIVA is still right for you.

Important Safety Information: You should not take BONIVA if you have certain problems with your esophagus (the tube that connects your mouth and stomach), low blood calcium, cannot sit or stand for at least 60 minutes, or are allergic to BONIVA or any of its ingredients.

BONIVA can cause serious side effects including problems with the esophagus; low blood calcium; bone, joint, or muscle pain; severe jaw bone problems; and unusual thigh bone fractures.

Before starting BONIVA, tell your doctor if you have problems with swallowing, stomach or digestive problems, have low blood calcium, plan to have dental surgery or teeth removed, or have kidney problems.

Stop taking BONIVA and tell your doctor right away if you have pain or trouble swallowing, chest pain, or severe or continuing heartburn, as these may be signs of serious upper digestive problems. Call your doctor immediately if jaw problems or hip, groin, or thigh pain develops; or if you have symptoms of low blood calcium such as spasms, twitching, cramps in your muscles, or numbness or tingling in your fingers, toes, or around your mouth.

Follow the dosing instructions for once-monthly BONIVA carefully.

The most common side effects are back pain, heartburn, stomach area pain, pain in your arms and legs, diarrhea, headache, muscle pain, and flu-like symptoms.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA at www.fda.gov/medwatch or by calling 1-800-FDA-1088.

Talk to your doctor for more information or if you have questions about your treatment.

Please see Medication Guide for additional important safety information.

Enroll today. Call 1-888-362-2544 or visit BONIVAfreetrial.com and try BONIVA free.

Genentech
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once-monthly Boniva® ibandronate sodium 150 mg tablet

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BON0000297500

Medication Guide
BONIVA® [bon-EE-va] (ibandronate sodium) TABLETS

Read the Medication Guide that comes with BONIVA before you start taking it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This Medication Guide does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition or your treatment. Talk to your doctor if you have any questions about BONIVA.

What is the most important information I should know about BONIVA?

BONIVA can cause serious side effects including:

1. Esophagus problems
2. Low calcium levels in your blood (hypocalcemia)
3. Bone, joint or muscle pain
4. Severe jaw bone problems (osteonecrosis)
5. Unusual thigh bone fractures

1. Esophagus problems. Some people who take BONIVA may develop problems in the esophagus (the tube that connects the mouth and the stomach). These problems include irritation, inflammation, or ulcers of the esophagus, which may sometimes bleed.

- **It is important that you take BONIVA exactly as prescribed to help lower your chance of getting esophagus problems. (See the section "How should I take BONIVA?")**
- **Stop taking BONIVA and call your doctor right away if you get chest pain, new or worsening heartburn, or have trouble or pain when you swallow.**

2. Low calcium levels in your blood (hypocalcemia). BONIVA may lower the calcium levels in your blood. If you have low blood calcium before you start taking BONIVA, it may get worse during treatment. Your low blood calcium must be treated before you take BONIVA. Most people with low blood calcium levels do not have symptoms, but some people may have symptoms. Call your doctor right away if you have symptoms of low blood calcium such as:

- Spasms, twitches, or cramps in your muscles
- Numbness or tingling in your fingers, toes, or around your mouth

Your doctor may prescribe calcium and vitamin D to help prevent low calcium levels in your blood while you take BONIVA. Take calcium and vitamin D as your doctor tells you to.

3. Bone, joint, or muscle pain. Some people who take BONIVA develop severe bone, joint, or muscle pain.

4. Severe jaw bone problems (osteonecrosis). Severe jaw bone problems may happen when you take BONIVA. Your doctor may examine your mouth before you start BONIVA. Your doctor may tell you to see your dentist before you start BONIVA. It is important for you to practice good mouth care during treatment with BONIVA.

5. Unusual thigh bone fractures. Some people have developed unusual fractures in their thigh bone. Symptoms of a fracture may include new or unusual pain in your hip, groin, or thigh. **Call your doctor right away if you have any of these side effects.**

What is BONIVA?

BONIVA is a prescription medicine used to treat or prevent osteoporosis in women after menopause. BONIVA helps increase bone mass and helps reduce the chance of having a spinal fracture (break). It is not known how long BONIVA works for the treatment and prevention of osteoporosis. You should see your doctor regularly to determine if BONIVA is still right for you. It is not known if BONIVA is safe and effective in children.

Who should not take BONIVA?

Do not take BONIVA if you:

- Have certain problems with your esophagus, the tube that connects your mouth with your stomach
- Cannot stand or sit upright for at least 60 minutes
- Have low levels of calcium in your blood
- Are allergic to BONIVA or any of its ingredients. A list of ingredients is at the end of this leaflet.

What should I tell my doctor before taking BONIVA?

Before you start BONIVA, be sure to talk to your doctor if you:

- Have problems with swallowing
- Have stomach or digestive problems
- Have low blood calcium
- Plan to have dental surgery or teeth removed
- Have kidney problems
- Have been told you have trouble absorbing minerals in your stomach or intestines (malabsorption syndrome)
- Are pregnant, or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if BONIVA can harm your unborn baby.
- Are breast-feeding or plan to breast-feed. It is not known if BONIVA passes into your milk and may harm your baby.

Tell your doctor and dentist about all the medicines you take, including prescription and non-prescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Certain medicines may affect how BONIVA works. Especially tell your doctor if you take:

- antacids
- aspirin

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- Nonsteroidal Anti-Inflammatory (NSAID) medicines

Know the medicines you take. Keep a list of them and show it to your doctor and pharmacist each time you get a new medicine.

How should I take BONIVA?

- Take BONIVA exactly as your doctor tells you.
- **BONIVA works only if taken on an empty stomach.**
- Take 1 BONIVA tablet **after** you get up for the day and **before** taking your first food, drink, or other medicine.
- Take BONIVA while you are sitting or standing.
- **Do not chew or suck on a tablet of BONIVA.**
- Swallow BONIVA tablet with a full glass (6-8 oz) of plain water only.
- Do **not** take BONIVA with mineral water, coffee, tea, soda, or juice.

After swallowing BONIVA tablet, wait at least 60 minutes:

- Before you lie down. You may sit, stand or walk, and do normal activities like reading.
- Before you take your first food or drink except for plain water.
- Before you take other medicines, including antacids, calcium, and other supplements and vitamins.

Do not lie down for at least 60 minutes after you take BONIVA and do not eat your first food of the day for at least 60 minutes after you take BONIVA.

- If you miss a dose of BONIVA, do not take it later in the day. Call your doctor for instructions.
- If you take too much BONIVA, call your doctor. Do not try to vomit. Do not lie down.

What are the possible side effects of BONIVA?

BONIVA may cause serious side effects.

- See **"What is the most important information I should know about BONIVA?"**

The most common side effects of BONIVA are:

- Back pain
- Heartburn
- Stomach area (abdominal) pain
- Pain in your arms and legs
- Diarrhea
- Headache
- Muscle pain
- Flu-like symptoms

You may get allergic reactions, such as hives or, in rare cases, swelling of your face, lips, tongue or throat. Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away. These are not all the possible side effects of BONIVA. For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

How do I store BONIVA?

- Store BONIVA at room temperature, 59°F to 86°F (15°C to 30°C).
- Keep BONIVA in a tightly closed container.

Keep BONIVA and all medicines out of the reach of children.

General information about the safe and effective use of BONIVA.

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in a Medication Guide. Do not use BONIVA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give BONIVA to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.

This Medication Guide summarizes the most important information about BONIVA. If you would like more information, talk with your doctor. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about BONIVA that is written for health professionals.

For more information, go to: www.myboniva.com or call 1-888-692-6648

What are the ingredients in BONIVA?

Active ingredient: ibandronate sodium

Inactive ingredients: lactose monohydrate, povidone, microcrystalline cellulose, crospovidone, purified stearic acid, colloidal silicon dioxide, and purified water. Tablet film coating contains: hypromellose, titanium dioxide, talc, polyethylene glycol 6000 and purified water.

Genentech

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Distributed by:
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1 DNA Way
South San Francisco, CA 94080, USA

This Medication Guide has been approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.

Issued: January 2011

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Sunscreen Made Simple

Seven rules for buying (and applying) skin protection

BY BARBARA BOUGHTON

How many times have you heard it? To cut your risk of skin cancer, sunscreen should be part of every summer (and winter) day. Yet almost one third of Americans don't use it, according to a *Consumer Reports* poll—often because they hate getting it in their eyes or think it's too expensive. And the rest of us are simply flummoxed by all the ingredients, SPF numbers, and claims (waterproof, sweatproof, ultra-gentle!). Don't sweat it. These simple guidelines are all you need:

- **Don't buy sky-high SPF.** Unless you've had skin cancer or have another skin condition, sunscreen with an SPF of 30 (or 50 if you're very fair) is fine. A higher SPF tends to be pricier, but it doesn't add enough protection to be worth the extra cost.
- **Buy "broad spectrum" protection.** That means the sunscreen blocks ultraviolet B rays, which cause sunburn, and ultraviolet A rays, which don't burn but penetrate farther into your skin. Both types age your skin and increase cancer risk.
- **Pick one product for the whole family.** Most kids will do fine with your sunscreen, says dermatologist >>

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Lisa Garner, MD, at the University of Texas Southwestern Medical School in Dallas.

● **For sensitive skin, use a mineral-based sunscreen.** These physically block rays rather than just absorb them and are less likely to provoke itchiness or other allergic reactions; look for *titanium dioxide* or *zinc oxide* on the label. Paraben-free preparations are gentler on your skin too.

● **If you're in the water a lot or you're athletic, look for *very water resistant* on the label.** And if sunscreen runs into your eyes when you sweat, use a wax-based stick, says Robert Friedman, MD, clinical professor of dermatology at NYU Langone Medical Center.

● **Stick with one you like.** Lotions, sprays, and sticks are equally effective."The best sunscreen is one you will use," says California dermatologist Robert Beer, MD. Good options: Neutrogena Ultra Sheer Dry-Touch Sunblock, CVS Sunscreen with Zinc Oxide, and Coppertone ultraGuard Lotion.

GO FIGURE

250

Percent increase in cases of melanoma among women 40 and younger between 1973 and 2004

Source: 2008 National Cancer Institute study

HOW TO GET FULL COVERAGE

Most people don't use sunscreen properly. It takes about two tablespoons (enough to fill a shot glass) to cover your face, ears, neck, chest, arms, and legs. Use at least a nickel-size dollop for your face alone. If you're using spray, an even sheen should coat the skin. Apply sunscreen half an hour before going outdoors (to work, the chemicals must be absorbed into the skin's upper layers); reapply every two hours while you're in the sun and more frequently after swimming, sweating, or toweling off.

PHILIPPE LISSAC/CORBIS

The spots you're likely to miss: "I once saw two women with sunburn so bad on the tops of their feet that they couldn't wear shoes," says Fernando Boiteux, chief of the lifeguard division of the Los Angeles County Fire Department. "The sand was hot, so I drove them off the beach in the lifeguard truck." Boiteux says people are also likely to neglect:

- **Back of the neck**
- **Top of the ears**
- **Lower back**
- **Butt, hips (especially when women downsize to a skimpier suit)**
- **Shoulder blades**
- **Bridge of the nose**

Barbara Boughton and Beth Dreher

Itch. Scratch. Infect. Repeat.

This summer, break the cycle with Lanacane® 3-in-1.

Mosquito bites, poison ivy, sunburn. It's hard to keep your child from scratching summer itches, which could start a vicious cycle of more itching and painful infection.

Lanacane 3-in-1 stops the cycle in its tracks.

Lanacane 3-in-1 provides:

- Soothing itch relief on contact
- Effective pain relief on contact
- Anti-bacterial agent to help fight infections

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WORTH TRYING

If Your Stomach Is a Pain, Here's Help

BY DOROTHY FOLTZ-GRAY

Three new approaches promise relief for the 35 million Americans who have irritable bowel syndrome (IBS):

- **Try an antibiotic.** A two-week course of the common antibiotic rifaximin shut down symptoms—diarrhea, bloating, and stomach pain—for 40 percent of participants in a recent study, and relief lasted more than two months. For some sufferers, the benefits may persist far longer, says Mark Pimentel, MD, of Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles, who conducted the research. "It's the most comprehensive treatment we've seen in drug trials."

- **Check for other explanations.** Nearly two thirds of people diagnosed with IBS instead had gallbladder-related problems, Saad F. Habba, MD, a gastroenterologist in Summit, New Jersey, discovered last year; others had lactose intolerance or colon inflammation. All three conditions, whose symptoms mimic those of IBS, can be treated. "If your doctor says you have IBS," advises Dr. Habba, "push him to investigate further."

- **Use your brain.** Simple strategies like muscle relaxation and controlling excessive worry significantly improved symptoms in 80 percent of patients in a trial conducted by Jeffrey M. Lackner, at the University at Buffalo-SUNY. "By changing how we respond to stress," says Lackner, "we can affect IBS symptoms."

PHRASE OF THE MONTH

Thirdhand Smoke

It sticks around for hours, days, or even months after a cigarette is smoked: a residue of toxins (lead, cyanide, and arsenic among them) that clings to virtually all surfaces in a room, a car, and other enclosed spaces long after the smoke is gone. Researchers have found that thirdhand smoke can combine with nitrous acid, a common indoor air pollutant, to form a carcinogen that can be inhaled by anyone in a room.

Source: study in the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*

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The LAP-BAND® System can finally help you achieve long-term weight loss.[1]

What you may not know about the LAP-BAND® System:

- Minimally invasive — no stomach stapling like gastric bypass.[2,3]
- Often performed as an outpatient procedure.
- Sustained weight loss can improve or resolve health issues.[4-7]
- Most cases covered by insurance.

LAP-BAND® is not for those who are pregnant or who have autoimmune or organ diseases. Reoperation, removal and fatalities are rare. Band slippage, stomach injury, vomiting and heartburn may occur.

PLEASE SEE IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION ON ADJACENT PAGE.

1. O'Brien PE, et al. *Obes Surg.* 2006;16:1032-1040. 2. Directions For Use (DFU). LAP-BAND AP® Adjustable Gastric Banding System with OMNIFORM® Design. Allergan, Inc. Irvine, CA. 09/10. 3. Fisher BL, et al. *Am J Surg.* 2002;184:95-105. 4. Dixon JB, et al. *Obes Surg.* 1999;9:385-389. 5. Dixon JB, et al. *Diabetes Care.* 2002;25:358-363. 6. Dixon JB, et al. *Arch Intern Med.* 2001;161:102-106. 7. Dixon JB, et al. *Obes Surg.* 1999;9:527-531.

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LAP-BAND AP® SYSTEM

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Important LAP-BAND® System Safety Information

INDICATIONS: The LAP-BAND® System is indicated for weight reduction for patients with obesity, with a Body Mass Index (BMI) of at least 40 kg/m² or a BMI of at least 30 kg/m² with one or more obesity related comorbid conditions.

It is indicated for use in adult patients who have failed more conservative weight reduction alternatives, such as supervised diet, exercise and behavior modification programs. Patients who elect to have this surgery must make the commitment to accept significant changes in their eating habits for the rest of their lives.

CONTRAINDICATIONS: The LAP-BAND® System is not recommended for non-adult patients, patients with conditions that may make them poor surgical candidates or increase the risk of poor results (e.g., inflammatory or cardiopulmonary diseases, GI conditions, symptoms or family history of autoimmune disease, cirrhosis), who are unwilling or unable to comply with the required dietary restrictions, who have alcohol or drug addictions, or who currently are or may be pregnant.

WARNINGS: The LAP-BAND® System is a long-term implant. Explant and replacement surgery may be required. Patients who become pregnant or severely ill, or who require more extensive nutrition may require deflation of their bands. Anti-inflammatory agents, such as aspirin, should be used with caution and may contribute to an increased risk of band erosion.

ADVERSE EVENTS: Placement of the LAP-BAND® System is major surgery and, as with any surgery, death can occur. Possible complications include the risks associated with the medications and methods used during surgery, the risks associated with any surgical procedure, and the patient's ability to tolerate a foreign object implanted in the body.

Band slippage, erosion and deflation, reflux, obstruction of the stomach, dilation of the esophagus, infection, or nausea and vomiting may occur. Reoperation may be required.

Rapid weight loss may result in complications that may require additional surgery. Deflation of the band may alleviate excessively rapid weight loss or esophageal dilation.

IMPORTANT: For full safety information please visit www.lapband.com, talk with your doctor, or call Allergan Product Support at 1-800-624-4261.

CAUTION: Rx only.

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LAP-BAND AP® SYSTEM

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TRENDS

Watch for These New Dangers

● **TICK TROUBLE** As if Lyme disease weren't bad enough: There's been a sharp rise in other tick-borne diseases, Maryn McKenna warns in *Self*—and they can be even more dangerous. Babesiosis and ehrlichiosis, for instance, come on like Lyme, with fever, headache, and muscle and joint pain, but if your immune system is compromised, the mortality rate is as high as 20 percent. If you get treated for Lyme and still have a fever, make sure your doctor considers other tick-borne diseases. The risk of infection is highest in spring and summer; check yourself, kids, and pets for ticks daily.

Deer tick

● **LASER RISK** As youthful hobbies go, an interest in lasers seems positively wholesome. But Christine Negroni points out in the *New York Times* that you can buy laser pointers online that are powerful enough to cause eye damage in a microsecond. Retina specialist Robert G. Josephberg, MD, in Valhalla, New York, recently treated a patient for a blind spot in one eye; he said a friend had waved a laser in his face. Dr. Josephberg went online and found that he could quickly buy a 100-milliwatt green laser pointer, though the FDA limit is five milliwatts. It's important for people to remember the dangers of looking directly at *any* laser, Dr. Josephberg says—a pointer or even a laser toy.

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Another Innovation from the DERMAdoctor, Audrey Kunin, M.D.

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- Add a fire pit and invite friends and family for roasted marshmallows under the stars.
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*Ryan, AS et al. *Prostaglandins Leukot Essent Fatty Acids*. 2010 Apr-Jun;82(4-6):305-14.

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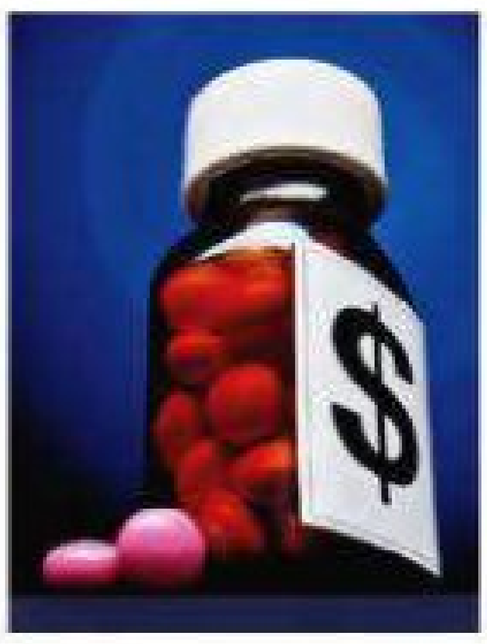

How does a drug go from $15 to $1,440 a dose?

That's how much the price jumped in February for a synthetic hormone, 17P, used to prevent premature births, Arthur Allen writes in *Slate*. The drug was already on the market in 1962 when the FDA began requiring rigorous tests as part of the drug-approval process, so 17P had never been officially proved safe and effective (it and a number of other drugs were simply "grandfathered" in). The agency has finally started to catch up, in some cases telling manufacturers to stop selling a medication, in others inviting them to perform needed tests. The problem: After tests come price hikes.

Inexpensive 17P is now exorbitant Makena. After an outcry, its maker lowered the price of a dose to $690, the *Los Angeles Times* reports, but a full course of treatment still runs nearly $14,000. (A drug for gout has made a leap, too, from about ten cents per old pill to $5 per pill for newly tested Colcrys.) Perhaps the tests for 17P were extraordinarily demanding? No, George Washington University obstetrics professor John Larsen, MD, told the *Times*. A healthy profit is fine, he said. "But there's no reason for it to be that high. The ingredients are cheap, and they didn't have to do any scientific research."

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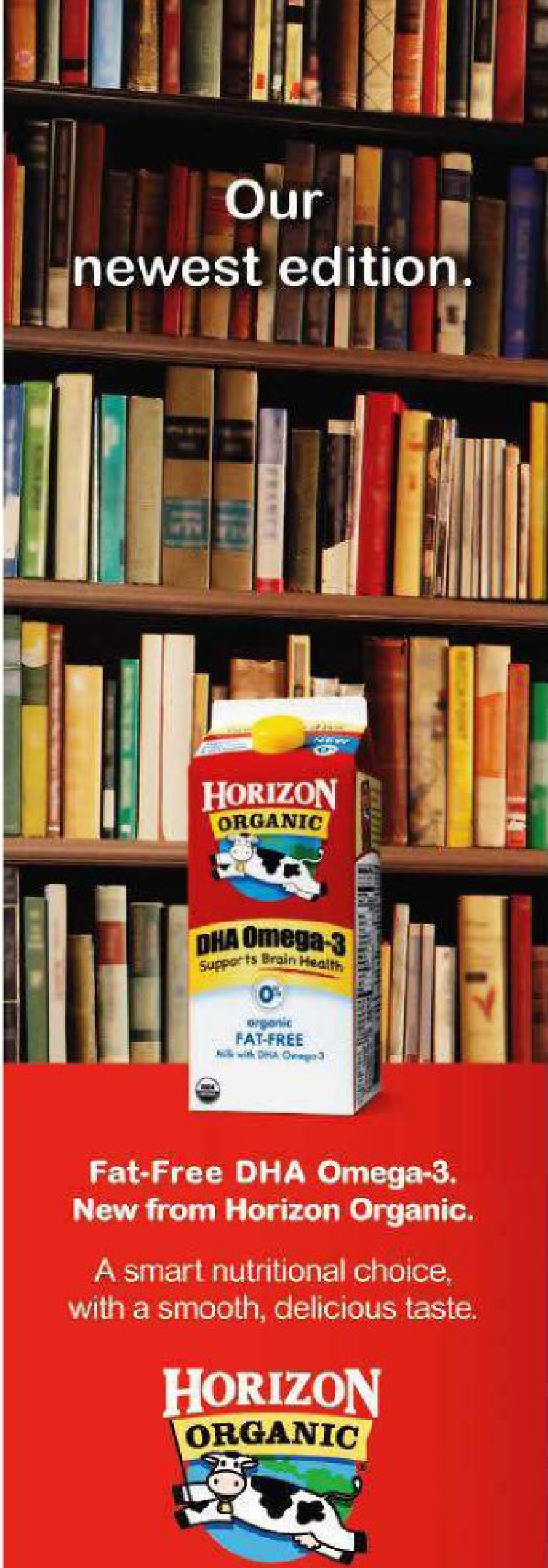

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More This, Less That

From research labs around the world, simple **additions** and **subtractions** for a healthier life

+ WALNUTS They're the top nut, says a recent analysis. In fact, a handful contains almost twice the antioxidants of other common nuts. And walnuts are generally eaten raw, which means you get the antioxidants at their maximum effectiveness. Benefits: They can lower cholesterol and help prevent damaging inflammation.

+ POTASSIUM Getting plenty of the mineral can cut your risk of stroke by more than 20 percent. Sweet potatoes and tomato paste are the most concentrated sources of potassium; bananas and low-fat dairy foods are good too.

+ FISH FOR YOUR HEART Seventy percent of Yup'ik Eskimos are overweight, but those who eat a traditional diet loaded with fatty fish (like salmon and sardines) don't have high levels of triglycerides and C-reactive protein—which are known to increase the risk of heart disease. The results suggest you *can* protect your heart, even if you can't shed pounds.

– WEARING YOUR CELL PHONE Men who routinely hooked their phones onto their belts for at least a year had thinner thighbones on that side. More research is needed, but keeping a little distance can't hurt.

– STINTING ON SLEEP A shocking 4.7 percent of adults told researchers they'd nodded off or fallen asleep while driving in the past 30 days. Sleep-deprived people also consume an extra 300 calories a day, another recent study showed.

– VITAMIN PILLS People sometimes take vitamin C or E in hopes of warding off cataracts, but in a study of more than 11,000 older men, the supplements didn't offer any protection.

– WORRY ABOUT STUDENT DOCS Having a resident assist on an operation slightly increased the risk of complications after surgery—but slightly *decreased* the risk of dying.

FROM LEFT: KEVIN SCHAFER/CORBIS; CORBIS

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CONSTIPATED?

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For occasional constipation associated with certain medications, get relief with

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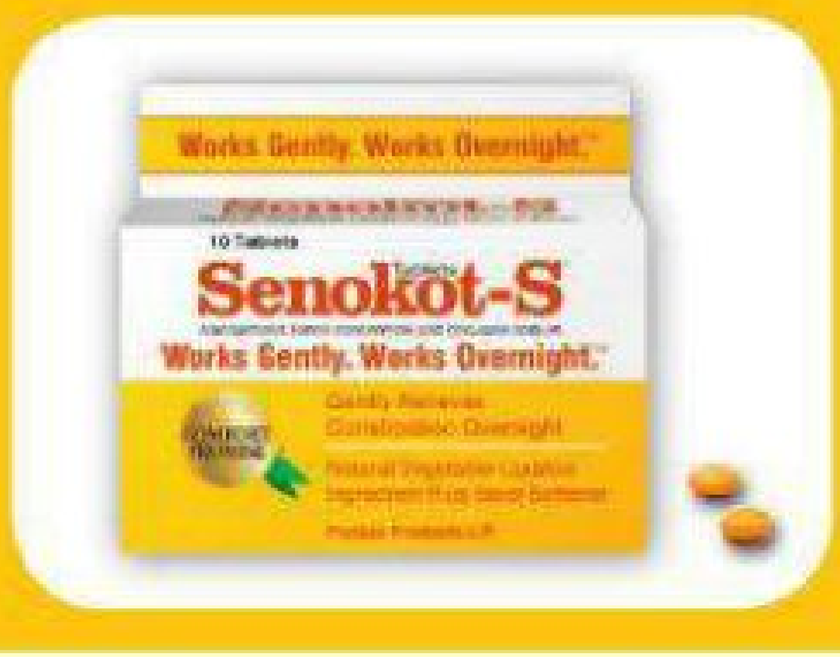

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Important Safety Information About CIMZIA® (certolizumab pegol)

What is the most important information I should know about CIMZIA?

CIMZIA is a prescription medicine that affects your immune system. CIMZIA can lower the ability of the immune system to fight infections. Serious infections have happened in patients taking CIMZIA, including tuberculosis (TB) and infections caused by viruses, fungi, or bacteria that have spread throughout the body. Some patients have died from these infections. Your doctor should test you for TB before starting CIMZIA. Your doctor should monitor you closely for signs and symptoms of TB during your treatment with CIMZIA.

Certain Types of Cancer

There have been cases of unusual cancers in children and teenage patients using TNF-blocking agents. CIMZIA is not approved for use in pediatric patients. For people taking TNF-blocker medicines, including CIMZIA, the chances for getting lymphoma or other cancers may increase. People with RA, especially more serious RA, may have a higher chance for getting a kind of cancer called lymphoma.

Before starting CIMZIA, tell your doctor if you

- Think you have an infection. You should not start taking CIMZIA if you have any kind of infection, are being treated for an infection or have signs of an infection such as fever, cough or flu-like symptoms or if you get a lot of infections or have infections that keep coming back.
- Have any open cuts or sores
- Have diabetes or HIV
- Have TB, or have been in close contact with someone with TB
- Were born in, lived in, or traveled to countries where there is more risk of getting TB. Ask your doctor if you are not sure.
- Live or lived in certain parts of country (such as the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys) where there is an increased risk for getting certain kinds of fungal infections (histoplasmosis, coccidioidomycosis, blastomycosis). These infections may develop or become severe if you take CIMZIA. If you do not know if you have lived in these types of areas, ask your doctor.
- Have or have had hepatitis B
- Have or have had any type of cancer
- Have congestive heart failure
- Have seizures, any numbness or tingling, or a disease that affects your nervous system such as multiple sclerosis
- Are scheduled to receive a vaccine. Do not receive a live vaccine while taking CIMZIA
- Are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding. CIMZIA has not been studied in pregnant or nursing women.
- Especially tell your doctor if you take: Kineret® (anakinra), Orencia® (abatacept), Rituxan® (rituximab), Tysabri® (natalizumab), or another TNF blocker. You have a higher chance for serious infections when taking CIMZIA with these medicines. You should not take CIMZIA while you take one of these medicines.

After starting CIMZIA, if you get an infection, any sign of an infection including a fever, cough, flu-like symptoms, or have open cuts or sores on your body, call your doctor right away. CIMZIA can make you more likely to get infections or make any infection that you may have worse.

What are the possible side effects of CIMZIA? CIMZIA can cause serious side effects including:

Heart Failure including new heart failure or worsening of heart failure you already have; **Nervous System Problems** such as Multiple Sclerosis, seizures, or inflammation of the nerves of the eyes; **Allergic Reactions**. Signs of an allergic reaction include a skin rash, swollen face, or trouble breathing; **Hepatitis B virus reactivation in patients who carry the virus in their blood**. In some cases, patients have died as a result of hepatitis B virus being reactivated. Your doctor should monitor you carefully during treatment with CIMZIA if you carry the hepatitis B virus in your blood; **Blood Problems**. Your body may not make enough of the blood cells that help fight infections or help stop bleeding; **Immune reactions including a lupus-like syndrome**. Symptoms include shortness of breath, joint pain, or a rash on the cheeks or arms that worsens with sun exposure.

Call your doctor right away if you develop any of the above side effects or symptoms.

The most common side effects of CIMZIA are: upper respiratory infections (flu, cold), rash, and urinary tract infections (bladder infections).

Other side effects have happened in some people including new psoriasis or worsening of psoriasis you already have and injection site reactions.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects to FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Please see Brief Summary on following pages.

CRD057-0311H2

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For treatment of adults with moderate to severe Rheumatoid Arthritis

Cimzia. RA relief that can help you get a *better grip* on life.

CIMZIA IS FAST—clinically proven vs. placebo to reduce RA pain, stiffness and fatigue in as little as 1-2 weeks for some and within 6 months for most.

CIMZIA LASTS—a majority of patients experienced noticeable improvement in RA signs and symptoms which lasted through 1 year and prevented further joint damage. Results may vary.

Ask your doctor about the benefits and risks of CIMZIA.

Please read Important Safety Information on the adjacent page.

cimzia®
(certolizumab pegol)

Visit cimzia.com/RA
Call 1-877-793-6410

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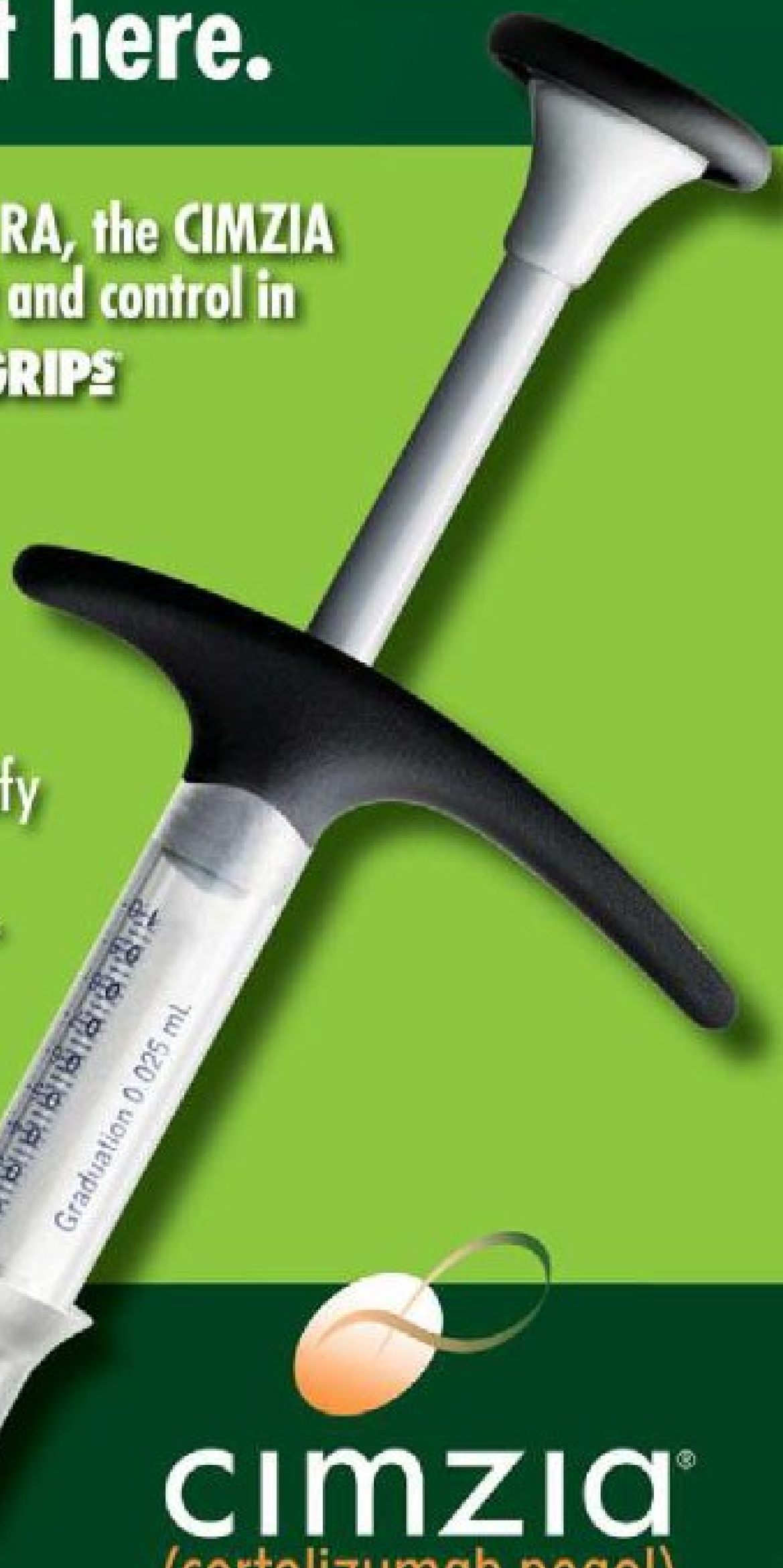
Fast, lasting RA relief can start here.

Guided by input from adults with RA, the CIMZIA syringe was designed for comfort and control in partnership with OXO GOOD GRIPS®



Insured or uninsured, you may qualify for a full year of savings.
Ask about our Co-pay Savings card.*
Go to Cimzia.com/RA

cimzia®
(certolizumab pegol)

For adults with moderate to severe RA.

Anaphylaxis or serious allergic reactions may occur. Hypersensitivity reactions have been reported rarely following CIMZIA administration.

*Subject to eligibility. Restrictions may apply.

Please see Brief Summary on following pages.

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Consumer Brief Summary

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CIMZIA®
(certolizumab pegol)

Read the Medication Guide that comes with CIMZIA before you start using it, and before each injection of CIMZIA. This brief summary does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition or treatment.

What is the most important information I should know about CIMZIA?

CIMZIA is a medicine that affects your immune system. CIMZIA can lower the ability of the immune system to fight infections. Serious infections have happened in patients taking CIMZIA. These infections include tuberculosis (TB) and infections caused by viruses, fungi or bacteria that have spread throughout the body. Some patients have died from these infections.

- Your doctor should test you for TB before starting CIMZIA.
- Your doctor should monitor you closely for signs and symptoms of TB during treatment with CIMZIA.

Before starting CIMZIA, tell your doctor if you:

- think you have an infection. You should not start taking CIMZIA if you have any kind of infection.
- are being treated for an infection.
- have signs of an infection, such as a fever, cough, flu-like symptoms
- have any open cuts or sores on your body
- get a lot of infections or have infections that keep coming back
- have diabetes
- have HIV
- have tuberculosis (TB), or have been in close contact with someone with TB
- were born in, lived in, or traveled to countries where there is more risk for getting TB. Ask your doctor if you are not sure.
- live or have lived in certain parts of the country (such as the Ohio and Mississippi River valleys) where there is an increased risk for getting certain kinds of fungal infections (histoplasmosis, coccidioidomycosis, or blastomycosis). These infections may develop or become more severe if you take CIMZIA. If you do not know if you have lived in an area where histoplasmosis, coccidioidomycosis, or blastomycosis is common, ask your doctor.
- have or have had hepatitis B
- use the medicine Kineret® (anakinra), Orencia® (abatacept), Rituxan® (rituximab), or Tysabri® (natalizumab)

After starting CIMZIA, if you get an infection, any sign of an infection including a fever, cough, flu-like symptoms, or have open cuts or sores on your body, call your doctor right away. CIMZIA can make you more likely to get infections or make any infection that you may have worse.

Certain types of Cancer

- There have been cases of unusual cancers in children and teenage patients using TNF-blocking agents.
- For people taking TNF-blocker medicines, including CIMZIA, the chances of getting lymphoma or other cancers may increase.
- People with RA, especially more serious RA, may have a higher chance of getting a kind of cancer called lymphoma.

See the section "What are the possible side effects of CIMZIA?" for more information.

What is CIMZIA?

CIMZIA is a medicine called a Tumor Necrosis Factor (TNF) blocker. CIMZIA is used in adult patients to:

- Lessen the signs and symptoms of moderately to severely active Crohn's disease (CD) in adults who have not been helped enough by usual treatments.
- Treat moderately to severely active rheumatoid arthritis (RA).

It is not known whether CIMZIA is safe and effective in children.

What should I tell my doctor before starting treatment with CIMZIA?

CIMZIA may not be right for you. Before starting CIMZIA, tell your doctor about all of your medical conditions, including if you:

- **have an infection**. (See, "What is the most important information I should know about CIMZIA?")
- **have or have had any type of cancer.**
- **have congestive heart failure**.
- **have seizures, any numbness or tingling, or a disease that affects your nervous system such as multiple sclerosis**.
- **are scheduled to receive a vaccine**. Do not receive a live vaccine while taking CIMZIA.
- **are allergic to any of the ingredients in CIMZIA**. See the end of this Brief Summary for a list of the ingredients in CIMZIA.

Tell your doctor if you are pregnant, planning to become pregnant, or breastfeeding. CIMZIA has not been studied in pregnant or nursing women.

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins and herbal supplements. Your doctor will tell you if it is okay to take your other medicines while taking CIMZIA. Especially, tell your doctor if you take:

- Kineret® (anakinra), Orencia® (abatacept), Rituxan® (rituximab), Tysabri® (natalizumab). You have a high chance for serious infections when taking CIMZIA with Kineret®, Orencia®, Rituxan®, or Tysabri®.
- A TNF blocker: Remicade® (infliximab), Humira® (adalimumab), Enbrel® (etanercept), Simponi® (golimumab).

You should not take CIMZIA, while you take one of these medicines.

How should I use CIMZIA?

- If your doctor prescribes the CIMZIA lyophilized pack for reconstitution, CIMZIA should be injected by a healthcare provider.
- If your doctor prescribes the CIMZIA prefilled syringe, see the section **"Patient Instructions for Use"** at the end of the Medication Guide for complete instructions for use. Do not give yourself an injection of CIMZIA unless you have been shown by your doctor or nurse.
- CIMZIA is given by an injection under the skin, into your abdomen or thigh area. Your doctor will tell you how much CIMZIA to inject and how often to inject CIMZIA, based on your condition to be treated. Do not use more CIMZIA or inject more often than prescribed.

What are the possible side effects of CIMZIA?

CIMZIA can cause serious side effects including:

See **"What is the most important information I should know about CIMZIA?"**

- **Heart Failure** including new heart failure or worsening of heart failure you already have. Symptoms include shortness of breath, swelling of your ankles or feet, or sudden weight gain.
- **Nervous System Problems** such as multiple sclerosis, seizures, or inflammation of the nerves of the eyes. Symptoms include dizziness, numbness or tingling problems with your vision, and weakness in your arms or legs.
- **Allergic Reactions**. Signs of an allergic reaction include a skin rash, swelling of the face, tongue, lips, or throat, or trouble breathing.
- **Hepatitis B virus reactivation in patients who carry the virus in their blood**. In some cases patients have died as a result of hepatitis B virus being reactivated. Your doctor should monitor you carefully during treatment with CIMZIA if you carry the hepatitis B virus in your blood. Tell your doctor if you have any of the following symptoms:
  - feel unwell
  - tiredness (fatigue)
  - poor appetite
  - fever, skin rash, or joint pain
- **Blood Problems**. Your body may not make enough of the blood cells that help fight infections or help stop bleeding. Symptoms include a fever that doesn't go away, bruising or bleeding very easily, or looking very pale.

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- **Immune reactions including a lupus-like syndrome**. Symptoms include shortness of breath, joint pain, or a rash on the cheeks or arms that worsens with sun exposure.

Call your doctor right away if you develop any of the above side effects or symptoms.

The most common side effects in people taking CIMZIA are:

- upper respiratory infections (flu, cold)
- rash
- urinary tract infections (bladder infections)

Other side effects with CIMZIA include:

- **Psoriasis**. Some people using CIMZIA had new psoriasis or worsening of psoriasis they already had. Tell your doctor if you develop red scaly patches or raised bumps that are filled with pus. Your doctor may decide to stop your treatment with CIMZIA.
- **Injection site reactions**. Redness, rash, swelling, itching or bruising can happen in some people. These symptoms will usually go away within a few days. If you have pain, redness, or swelling around the injection site that doesn't go away within a few days or gets worse, call your doctor right away.

Tell your doctor about any side effect that bothers you or does not go away.

These are not all of the side effects with CIMZIA. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for more information.

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Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

General information about CIMZIA

Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes that are not mentioned in Medication Guides. Do not use CIMZIA for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give CIMZIA to other people, even if they have the same condition. It may harm them.

This brief summary summarizes the most important information about CIMZIA. If you would like more information, talk with your doctor. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about CIMZIA that is written for health professionals.

For more information go to www.CIMZIA.com or call 1-866-4CIMZIA (424-6942).

Always keep CIMZIA, injection supplies, puncture-proof container, and all other medicines out of the reach of children.

What are the ingredients in CIMZIA?

CIMZIA lyophilized powder: Active ingredient: certolizumab pegol. Inactive ingredients: sucrose, lactic acid, polysorbate. The pack contains Water for Injection, for reconstitution of the lyophilized powder.

CIMZIA prefilled syringe: Active ingredient: certolizumab pegol. Inactive ingredients: sodium acetate, sodium chloride, and Water for Injection.

CIMZIA has no preservatives.

Product developed and manufactured for:
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Learning to Bunt

Dad taught me that life was more than just swinging for the fences

BY SANDY HINGSTON FROM *More*

ILLUSTRATED BY ELLEN WEINSTEIN

I'm standing on the scrubby grass of our backyard, years ago, behind the cramped ranch-style house where I live with my mom, dad, two sisters, one brother, and my mom's dad. My father's arms are around me. His hands are covering my hands, gently pushing them upward on my brother's sturdy Louisville Slugger.

"You've got to choke up," Dad tells me. "The bunt is all about control."

My sisters are playing on the swing set. My brother is mowing the front lawn. They don't pay any atten- >>

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Choose the Best Food for Your Best Friend

We love our pets like family and want to be sure that we're giving them a healthy diet. But with so many pet foods touting themselves as healthy and showing pictures of meat and veggies on the front of their bags, you really have to read the ingredients on the back or side of the bag to get to the truth.

To help determine exactly what your dog or cat is getting from their food, simply follow these tips from Blue Buffalo:

EVALUATING THE INGREDIENT LIST

The top 10 ingredients make up 80% or more of a pet food's entire formula, so make sure that these are natural, high-quality ingredients like real meat, whole grains and vegetables.

Ingredients are listed by weight, which means there is more of the first one on the list than anything else. Look for real meat at the top of the list, not corn or by-products.

INGREDIENTS TO LOOK FOR IN A QUALITY FOOD

Real meat, such as chicken, fish or lamb provides proteins that are essential for growth, muscle maintenance and overall well-being.

Whole grains like brown rice, barley and oats supply the complex carbohydrates that provide your pet with much-needed energy.

Fruits and vegetables contain healthy fiber and deliver the antioxidants, vitamins and minerals your pet needs to stay healthy.

WHY CHOOSE BLUE™

BLUE pet foods are formulated with carefully selected, high-quality ingredients – because we think of our pets as family members.

Real meat is always the first ingredient, followed by whole grains, garden veggies and fruit. Look for BLUE at leading pet specialty stores everywhere.

Visit bluebuffalo.com for more information.

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"I didn't want my boy eating chicken by-product meal. **That's why I switched him to BLUE."**

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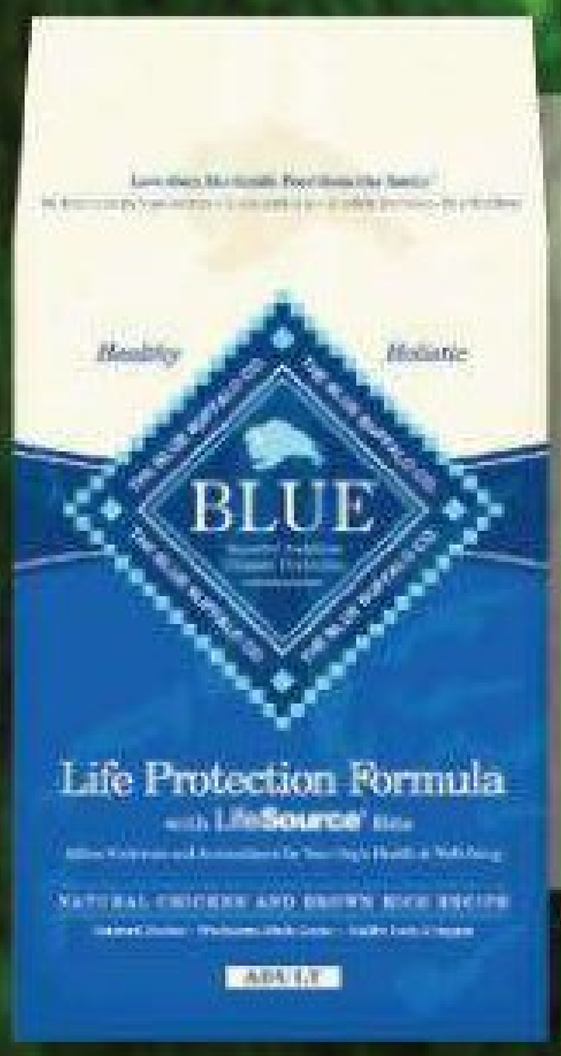

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Wholesome Whole Grains	✓	?
Garden Veggies & Fruit	✓	?
All Natural*	✓	?
LifeSource® Bits	✓	?
NO Corn, Wheat or Soy	✓	?
NO Chicken or Poultry By-Product Meals	✓	?

*Fortified with vitamins and minerals.

Compare your dog's food to BLUE™ at

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Love them like family.
Feed them like family.™

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tion to Dad and me. My little sister is still too young, and my big brother and sister have already been through this, have held the bat and stood with Dad behind them, his hands over theirs, demonstrating the jerk of the bat that will cause a baseball to drop precipitously to the ground, then roll a yard or two toward the pitcher or first base or third. A bunt, Dad says, is a thing of beauty. A bunt is opportunity.

A bunt is also hard. I'm fairly small, and the bat is unwieldy. Choking up feels unnatural; why would they make the thing so long if you're supposed to hold it way up above the knob? Besides, what's fun in baseball is swinging away, whipping that baby off your shoulder and lining a drive between the shortstop and third or, even better, whaling a fly ball out beyond the blueberry bushes that mark the end of our yard, not that I've ever done that. But Dad doesn't teach us to hit—not any of us, even my brother. He only teaches us to bunt.

"Remember: control," Dad says, and drops his hands from mine, coming around to pitch.

He stands only a few yards away, cupping the ball. He's young and so thin, he has to work to gain weight, drinking milkshakes, slurping Cokes, downing chocolate bars whenever he can. He has beautiful wavy black hair. He's a teacher, but he also coaches after school: track, baseball, football. Whatever the school needs, he'll do, for extra cash. We're a lot of mouths to feed.

"Remember: control," Dad says, and drops his hands from mine, coming around to pitch.

He tosses to me. I've let my hands slip back down the bat, and when I bring it around, I smack a nice little liner, almost all the way to the swing set. I'm delighted. Dad, not so much. "Choke up," he reminds me, going to get the ball. Another pitch. This time I manage to dribble it back toward him—not pretty, but definitely a bunt. "There you go," he says, grinning. Then he makes me do it again and again and again—not just today but next Saturday, too, and the next, and the next ...

I don't mind. It's time with Dad, one on one, which is something all of us get precious little of. I want to please him, do it right, make him proud of me. I'm only six years old; I don't understand baseball or my father.

Maybe he focused exclusively on bunting because we couldn't hit away in the small backyard of that little house.

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I think it was more than that, though. The bunt isn't a game changer, like a homer or a triple. Instead, it nudges things along—keeping the ball as far as possible from where your opponent wants it to be. It's a means to an end, a strategy, brains over brawn—something my smart, skinny dad understood.

My siblings and I haven't grown up to be long-ball hitters. None of us have changed the world. In the past few years, we've lost jobs, lost our savings, lost our confidence, lost our faith. Lost Dad. But thanks to him, we're masters at making do, stretching things out, getting the most from what opportunity offers. At keeping it going with nothing more than grit in our hearts and our grip on the bat.

GO FIGURE

40

Percent of caregivers who expect to contribute financially to the care of a family member

83

Percent who actually do

Source: Genworth Financial

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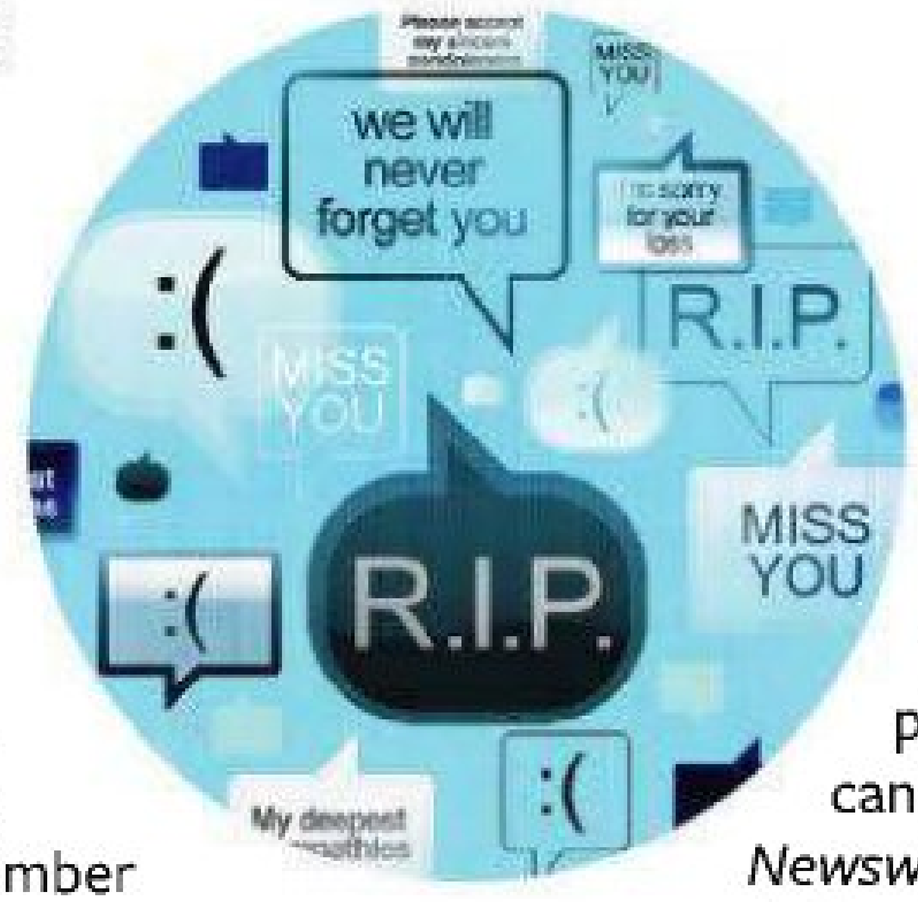
The Long Goodbye



What happens to your Facebook profile when you die? It stays as is, unless a family member requests that it be taken down. Or the family can ask that the page be "memorialized" (to send this request to Facebook, go to the site's Help Center, then click on Privacy and Memorializing Accounts), which means the company removes your contact information and relationship status, and friends can no longer be added. After that, any friend can post on the wall.

Increasingly, Facebook pages that live on after their owners are gone have become "a real gathering place where friends can grieve together," *Newsweek*'s Lisa Miller wrote. In Facebook's footsteps, other tribute sites have been born:

- **1000memories.com** empowers friends to request donations for funeral costs or favorite charities of the one who passed.
- **Wouldhavesaid.com** lets people post messages that they couldn't say before.
- **Legacy.com** provides mourners with a guest book to sign and a search function to find obituaries.

RELATIONSHIPS

The Marriage Biz

Do economists make the best lovers? The new book *Spousonomics* suggests couples use business theories like comparative advantage and supply-and-demand to jump-start their marriage. It must have touched a nerve: The book, by Paula Szuchman and Jenny Anderson, landed on amazon.com's list of bestselling marriage-advice tomes. If couples take inspiration from bankers and businesspeople, whom else might they use as a model for marriage? Humor editor Andy Simmons had these suggestions: **DICTATORS** Sometimes one of you has to seize control. Does he want to paint the living room black? Thank him for his suggestion, then suspend all voting privileges. **PANHANDLERS** To get what you want, stake out a location with good foot traffic, like the kitchen doorway. Remember, you're offering your spouse the chance to feel better about herself by feeling better than you. **LAWYERS** Get it in writing. "I will abstain from putting mushrooms in every dish if you forgo quoting Will Ferrell movies." Break it, and pay a penalty—beef stew for her, chick flicks for him.

FROM TOP: ILLUSTRATED BY JOSUE EVILLA; ILLUSTRATED BY ELWOOD SMITH

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IN YOUR WORDS

Dear Mom

In honor of Mother's Day, we asked readers, What would you tell your mother if you could? Here's a sampling of your answers:

- I'm sorry. Thank you. I love you. Not necessarily in that order.

Anna O'Connell, 45, Hollywood, Maryland

- There is no point trying to make your recipes. We miss you so much, we can hardly swallow them.

Diane Granic, 54, Westminster, Maryland

- I wish I could tell my mother I'm sorry for being so hard on her. *S. S., 53,* Edmond, Oklahoma

- You were honest, fair, and intelligent. It was not as much what you said as what you did.

Dorothy Shapiro, 78, Liberty, New York

- Please stop picking on everyone, especially Dad. Can't you just let people be? *S. H.,* Galveston, Texas

- I'd like to tell my mother that I have two tattoos. She would flip out if she knew.

Sheila Woodall, 42, Cornelia, Georgia

- I admired your courage and tenacity during some really tough times.

Connie W. Seals, 64, Tampa, Florida

- Everything I am I owe to her.

J. E., via Internet

- I'd ask her whether I have become the mother, grandmother, and daughter she hoped I would be.

Melinda Sanderson, 59, Oakville, Missouri

- I wish I had gotten to know you better.

Judith Francello, 64, Escondido, California

- I forgive you for not being perfect.

Joann Goldstein, Las Vegas, Nevada

- Thank you for all the times you told me no and explained why.

Sherry Barrett, 43, Carthage, Texas

- The time you spend with your children and grandchildren is worth more than your dollars will ever be.

Patty Melton, 56, Tulsa, Oklahoma

- I would thank her for taking care of my children when they were little. I wish she could see them now.

Deborah Benton, 58, Houston, Texas

- I never understood why you made me eat beans every night.

Nancy Santos, 45, Silver Spring, Maryland

Read more responses in our *Best You* e-mail newsletter. Sign up at mybestyou.com.

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Moms know Charmin Ultra Strong can help. Its DiamondWeave texture is soft and more durable.* Plus, Charmin Ultra Strong leaves fewer pieces behind than the ultra rippled brand — so you can get a more dependable clean. And for an extra clean finish, try Charmin Freshmates.

*When compared to the Ultra Rippled Brand. © Procter & Gamble, Inc., 2011

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*Vitamins C, E & selenium. 1. Paddon-Jones D, Rasmussen BB. *Curr Opin Clin Nutr Metab Care.* 2009;12:86-90.
2. English KL, Paddon-Jones D. *Curr Opin Clin Nutr Metab Care.* 2010;13:34-39.

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13 Things the Funeral Director Won't Tell You

BY MICHELLE CROUCH

1) Go ahead and plan your funeral, but think twice before paying in advance. You risk losing everything if the funeral home goes out of business. Instead, keep your money in a pay-on-death account at your bank.

2) If you or your spouse is an honorably discharged veteran, burial is free at a Veterans Affairs National Cemetery. This includes the grave, vault, opening and closing, marker, and setting fee. Many State Veterans Cemeteries offer free burial for veterans and, often, spouses (www.cem.va.gov).

3) You can buy caskets that are just as nice as the ones in my showroom for thousands of dollars less online from Walmart, Costco, or straight from a manufacturer.

4) On a budget or concerned about the environment? Consider a rental casket. The body stays inside the casket in a thick cardboard container, which is then removed for burial or cremation.

5) Running a funeral home without a refrigerated holding room is like running a restaurant without a walk-in cooler. But many funeral homes don't offer one because

Some funeral homes hide their low-cost caskets in the basement or in the boiler room.

Buy a casket online from Walmart or Costco and save thousands.

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they want you to pay for the more costly option: embalming. Most bodies can be presented very nicely without it if you have the viewing within a few days of death.

6) Some hard-sell phrases to be wary of: "Given your position in the community ...," "I'm sure you want what's best for your mother," and "Your mother had excellent taste. When she made arrangements for Aunt Nellie, this is what she chose."

7) "Protective" caskets with a rubber gasket? They don't stop decomposition. In fact, the moisture and gases they trap inside have caused caskets to explode.

8) If there's no low-cost casket in the display room, ask to see one anyway. Some funeral homes hide them in the basement or the boiler room.

9) Ask the crematory to return the ashes in a plain metal or plastic container—not one stamped *temporary container*. That's just a sleazy tactic to get you to purchase a more expensive urn.

10) Shop around. Prices at funeral homes vary wildly, with direct cremation costing $500 at one funeral home and $3,000 down the street. (Federal law requires that prices be provided over the phone.)

11) We remove pacemakers because the batteries damage our crematories.

12) If I try to sell you a package that I say will save you money, ask for the individual price list anyway. Our packages often include services you don't want or need.

13) Yes, technically I am an undertaker or a mortician. But doesn't *funeral director* have a nicer ring to it?

Sources: Funeral directors in Illinois, New Jersey, Tennessee, and Washington; funerals.org; and Joshua Slocum, executive director of the Funeral Consumers Alliance and coauthor of *Final Rights: Reclaiming the American Way of Death.*

More things your funeral director won't tell you are at readersdigest.com/funeraldirector.

HOW TO

Split the Check

You and your group of 12 have had your fill of food and wine. Now comes the fun part: paying the check. Neel Shah of theawl.com has a few suggestions.

If you're under 25: "You are probably poor," he writes. So it's okay for each diner to figure out what he owes and add a percentage for the tax and tip. (In Chicago, for instance, that's 30 percent extra.) Do *not* forget to pony up for tax and tip, Shah says. "People notice! Don't be that person. Everyone hates that person. (Why is it always the same person?)"

If you're over 25: Divide the check equally, no matter who had what. Yes, this favors the people who have expensive tastes and drink like sailors. Order up a storm if you feel slighted, but don't whine about it, counsels Shah. "It evens out over time."

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RECAP

6 Insurance Policies That Aren't Worth the Money

BY AARON CROWE

FROM **AOL Daily Finance**

"Insurance is meant to protect against the really big stuff that rains down on you," says Fair Oaks, California, insurance agent Alan Canton. But Canton and other agents know that not all insurance policies are created equal. Here are six policies they say aren't worth the money:

1 Accidental death and dismemberment

Free or low-cost policies offered by employers usually cover accidents involving death or dismemberment, so there's no need to buy it on your own, says Joan Antoniello, vice president for personal and corporate insurance planning at Weiser Capital Management.

And while the average $15-a-month cost is low, the premiums add up ($180 and more a year)—money that could be better spent on adding some other type of insurance, she says.

2 Comprehensive and collision coverage for old cars

Of course, you want to keep your car insured (it's the law in most states), but beyond the minimum requirements, there's often no need to get comprehensive and collision coverage for a car with a very low Kelley Blue Book value, says Joel Ohman, a certified financial planner and the founder of the website carinsurancecomparison.com. Collision covers the cost of replacement and repairs after a typical car accident, while comprehensive takes care of events like fire, theft, vandalism, and falling objects. The latter coverage is often required by lenders, but once the car is paid off and the car's value has dropped, many people forget to stop paying for it, Ohman says.

A good rule, he adds, is that if collision and comprehensive coverage cost more than 10 percent of the car's value, turn down both types of coverage.

3 Car-rental insurance

If you already have car insurance, don't buy it at the car-rental counter, says CPA Steve Elliott. Your existing policy should cover you if something goes awry. There are times when car-rental insurance may make sense, however. Ray Martin of CBS MoneyWatch.com points out that while your existing car insurance or credit cards may already cover a rental car,

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it's a good idea to opt for the insurance if you're driving outside the country or have high deductibles for personal effects stolen from the rental car.

4 Mini-med insurance

These "limited benefit" health insurance plans have been blasted by Congress for offering very little coverage to policyholders. Often these policies are sold to people who can't afford major-medical insurance, such as part-time or migrant workers. McDonald's, which offers these plans to tens of thousands of workers, recently argued that many of its employees would likely have no health coverage if it weren't for these plans.

Buyers should know that these policies are best used for minor cuts and scrapes. And while most of them don't carry a deductible, they do have spending caps, so anything beyond a $10,000 surgery likely won't be covered, says Canton. Typically, mini-med policies cost $25 to $100 a month.

5 Divorce insurance

Larry King may have wanted to get this coverage, but for most people, the cost versus benefit doesn't make economic or emotional sense, says Justin Reckers, a certified financial planner. Do you really want to start a marriage by planning for failure?

The website WedLock Divorce Insurance makes it sound reasonable, saying almost half of all families go through divorce every year and end up below the poverty line, losing 77 percent of their total net worth. The site even has divorce-probability and divorce-cost calculators.

According to Reckers, WedLock sells coverage in units, with $1,250 in coverage costing $15.99 per month. Policies mature in 48 months, meaning benefits won't be paid until after four years as a way to discourage people who are contemplating divorce from buying the insurance and quickly collecting. Buying the maximum $1 million in coverage will cost $614,016 in premiums by the time the benefits are payable after 48 months.

6 Mortgage life insurance

Mortgage life insurance is basically life insurance meant to pay off a home in the event of a tragedy. However, mortgage life is typically 200 to 300 percent more expensive than term life insurance.

If you had a $100,000 mortgage, for example, you would spend two to three times more on mortgage life insurance for that amount than you would if you bought a term life policy for $100,000 in coverage for 30 years. And with mortgage life insurance, the money typically goes directly to a mortgage lender, not to your family. It may make sense, however, for people who have a medical history that makes term life insurance prohibitively expensive.

NOTABLE QUOTE

> "You probably don't make what you think, and you probably spend more than you know."
>
> **Lisa Desjardins and Rick Emerson,** ***Zombie Economics: A Guide to Personal Finance—How to Slay Your Bills, Decapitate Debt and Fight the Apocalypse of Financial Doom*** **(Avery, $18)**

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(And you're in here. Again.)

Maybe today is the day to talk to your doctor about overactive bladder.

It's no surprise–once again you've had to run off to the ladies' room. If you're tired of being in here instead of out there, ask your doctor if prescription Toviaz® (fesoterodine fumarate) could be right for your overactive bladder symptoms. Toviaz is a once-daily pill that significantly reduces sudden urges and accidents over 24 hours.*

Plus, Toviaz comes with a plan, with tips on food and drink choices and exercises to help you train your bladder. Find out what you can do about your overactive bladder symptoms–besides just wishing they'll go away.

Toviaz treats the symptoms of overactive bladder (leaks, strong, sudden urges to go, going too often).

Results may vary

The plan can help you manage overactive bladder symptoms:

.....

Symptoms of overactive bladder are not necessarily a normal part of aging. They're caused by sudden spasms of the bladder muscle.

Find more interesting facts at Toviaz.com/tips

Important Safety Information

If you have certain stomach problems, glaucoma, or cannot empty your bladder, you should not take Toviaz.

Toviaz may cause allergic reactions that may be serious. If you experience swelling of the face, lips, throat, or tongue, stop taking Toviaz and get emergency help. Medicines like Toviaz can cause blurred vision, drowsiness, and decreased sweating. Use caution when driving, doing unsafe tasks, or in especially hot environments, until you know how Toviaz affects you. Drinking alcohol while taking medicines such as Toviaz may cause increased drowsiness.

The most common side effects are dry mouth and constipation.

Toviaz has benefits and risks. There may be other options.

You're encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.FDA.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

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(TOH-vee-as)

ABOUT OVERACTIVE BLADDER

Overactive bladder happens when the bladder muscle squeezes too often or when you don't want it to. You may have wetting accidents (urge urinary incontinence). You may have a strong need to urinate right away (urgency). You may also have to go too often (frequency).

WHO IS TOVIAZ FOR?

Who can take TOVIAZ?

Adults 18 years and older with symptoms of overactive bladder.
TOVIAZ has not been studied in children.

Who should not take TOVIAZ?

Do not take TOVIAZ if you:

- Are not able to empty your bladder (urinary retention).
- Your stomach empties slowly (gastric retention).
- Have an eye problem called "uncontrolled narrow-angle glaucoma."
- Are allergic to TOVIAZ or any of its ingredients or to Detrol or Detrol LA.

BEFORE YOU START TOVIAZ

Tell your doctor about all your medical conditions, including:

- Stomach or intestinal problems or problems with constipation.
- Problems emptying your bladder or if you have a weak urine stream.
- Treatment for an eye problem called narrow-angle glaucoma.
- Kidney or liver problems.
- A condition called myasthenia gravis.
- If you are pregnant or trying to become pregnant. It is not known if TOVIAZ can harm your unborn baby.
- If you are breastfeeding. It is not known if TOVIAZ passes into your breast milk or if it can harm your baby.

Before starting on TOVIAZ, tell your doctor about all the medicines you take, including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins and herbal products. TOVIAZ may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how TOVIAZ works. Especially tell your doctor if you are taking antibiotics or antifungal medicines.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF TOVIAZ

TOVIAZ may cause allergic reactions that may be serious. Symptoms of a serious allergic reaction may include swelling of the face, lips, throat or tongue. If you experience these symptoms, you should stop taking TOVIAZ and get emergency medical help right away.

The most common side effects are:

- Dry mouth
- Constipation

TOVIAZ may cause other less common side effects, including:

- Dry eyes
- Trouble emptying the bladder

These are not all of the possible side effects of TOVIAZ.
For a complete list, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

HOW TO TAKE TOVIAZ

- Take TOVIAZ exactly as your doctor tells you.
- Your doctor may give you the lower 4 mg dose of TOVIAZ if you have certain medical conditions, such as severe kidney problems.
- Take TOVIAZ with liquid and swallow the tablet whole. Do not chew, divide or crush the tablet.
- You can take TOVIAZ with or without food.
- If you miss a dose of TOVIAZ, begin taking TOVIAZ again the next day. Do not take two doses of TOVIAZ in the same day.

Things you should keep in mind when taking TOVIAZ:

- Use caution in driving, operating machinery, or doing other dangerous activities until you know how TOVIAZ affects you. Blurred vision and drowsiness are possible side effects of medicines such as TOVIAZ.
- Use caution in hot environments. Decreased sweating and severe heat illness can occur when medicines such as TOVIAZ are used in a hot environment.
- Drinking alcohol while taking medicines such as TOVIAZ may cause increased drowsiness.

WHAT IS TOVIAZ?

TOVIAZ is a prescription medicine used in **adults** to treat symptoms of a condition called **overactive bladder**, including:

- Urge urinary incontinence—leaking or wetting accidents due to a strong need to urinate.
- Urinary urgency—having a strong need to urinate right away.
- Urinary frequency—having to urinate too often.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

- This is only a summary of important information. Ask your doctor or pharmacist for complete product information.
- Go to www.Toviaz.com.
- Call **1-877-9-TOVIAZ**.

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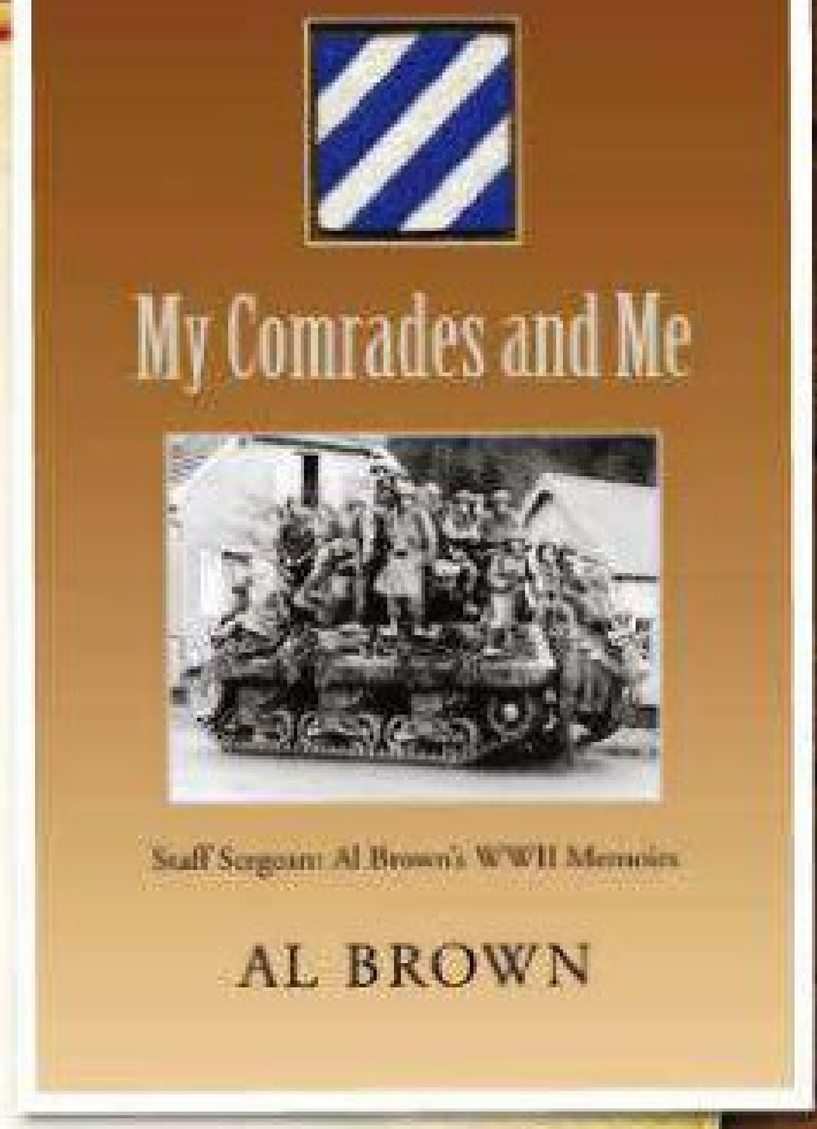
Imagine...

being a civilian one day and a serviceman the next.

On Sgt. Al Brown's first day in combat, he nearly drowned... This is just one of the unforgettable experiences that he shares in ***My Comrades and Me: Staff Sergeant Al Brown's WWII Memoirs.***

Get a glimpse into his life as a soldier and his personal experiences during the Second World War. Learn about the "do something, even if it's wrong" rule—it could very well save your life. Join him and his comrades as they begin basic infantry training, struggle through grueling boot camp, fight to survive on the battlefield, and live to tell their story.



An exciting book with thrilling action scenes, a dash of humor, and more, ***My Comrades and Me: Staff Sergeant Al Brown's WWII Memoirs*** is a look back not only at Sgt. Brown's life but also his comrades'. It pays tribute to the riflemen, the real heroes who helped pave the way to victory.

"War is not just about death and destruction. It is about leisure time between battles when we Dogfaces enjoy each other and live almost normal lives. Even on the battlefield there can be humorous moments."

My Comrades and Me

Staff Sergeant Al Brown's WWII Memoirs

Al Brown

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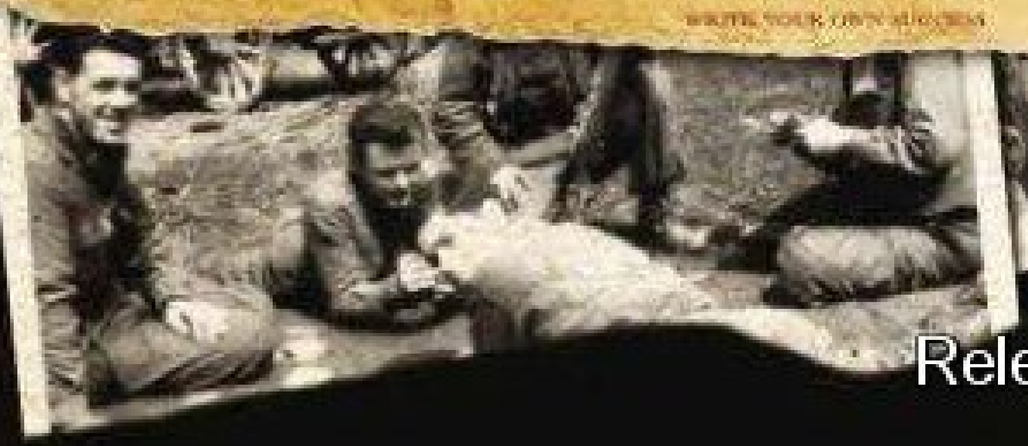

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BRIAN BRANCH-PRICE/AP PHOTO

Random Ideas from All Over

● **Good news about airport scanners:** Don't worry. Exposure to a backscatter X-ray scanner is the equivalent of the radiation a traveler gets from three to nine minutes of everyday activity—or a few extra minutes of flight time. (*Archives of Internal Medicine*)

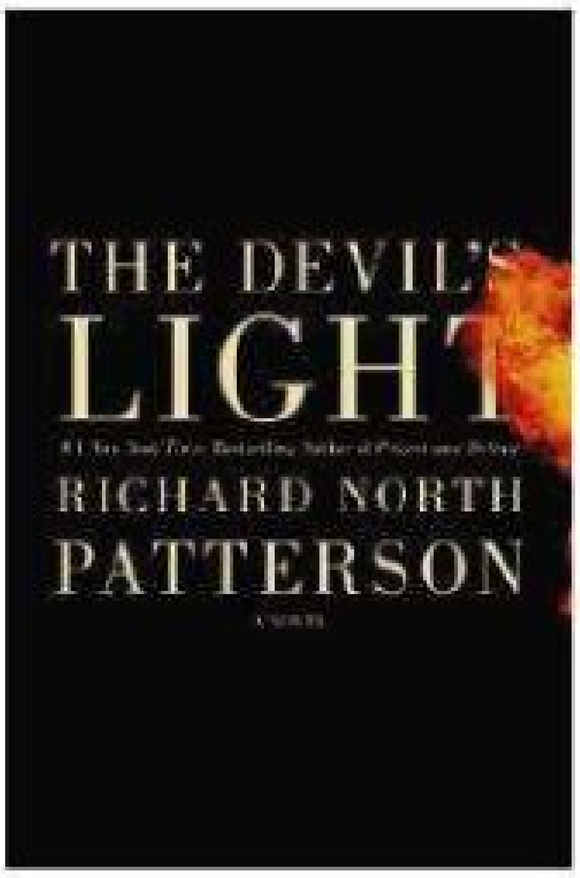
● **Our handwriting is going to hell.** We send 294 billion e-mails and five billion text messages every day, yet we put pen to paper only when we make a grocery list or sign a credit card receipt. Instruction time for cursive is falling off too. With all the keyboarding we do, is it any wonder we can't write legibly? (cbsnews.com)

● **New help for fighting head lice.** A safe prescription drug, Natroba, is about to debut. Also here: LouseBuster, a device that resembles a scalp massager and hair dryer, which is 99.2 percent effective against this scourge of elementary school. (*Time*)

● **Americans are hoarding office supplies.** Whether we call it stockpiling or pilfering, more and more pens and Post-its are making their way out of supply closets and into our homes. Perhaps as a result of heightened job insecurity, 56 percent of U.S. office workers now confess to taking home a piece of the office for personal use. (*Bloomberg Businessweek*)

● **Be prepared.** A new day, a new disaster? Now there's a tool for worst-case scenarios: The Etón Raptor ($150) is a combination LED flashlight, clock, cell phone charger, weather tool, radio, and bottle opener. And it comes with a solar cell for perpetual power. (*Popular Mechanics*)

Mini Book Excerpts



International Thriller

"A Pakistani bomb would destroy an entire city. That would cause widespread death and devastation, stagger the world economy, unleash a wave of fear that could curtail our civil liberties, and create mass sentiment for withdrawal from the Middle East ... In Bin Laden's mind, such an act would command deep admiration throughout the Arab world ..."

"Assuming that al Qaeda has its weapon, where do they plan to set it off? Your people ponder that question night and day."

"And weekends."

The Devil's Light **by Richard North Patterson (Scribner, $26)**

Beach Novel

People kept asking her questions, in voices that were too loud, as if she were asleep, even though she was looking right at them. Did she remember falling over? Did she remember the trip in the ambulance? Did she know what day of the week it was? Did she know what date it was?

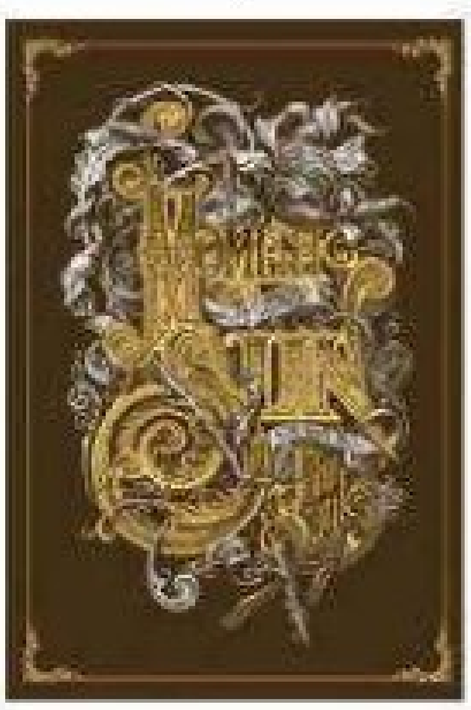
"Nineteen ninety-eight?"

A harried-looking doctor peered down at her through glasses with red plastic rims. "Are you quite sure about that?... Because, you see, it's actually 2008."

What Alice Forgot **by Liane Moriarty (Amy Einhorn Books/Putnam, $24.95)**

Epic Novel

There are Spanish firing at them from a thicket of bamboo across from the dirt road that runs parallel to the shore, probably the same men who just abandoned the fort, and Hod is thankful for the trenches they've left along the west side of it. He squats with the others, bullets thapping against the low earthworks, and turns when he hears a band playing "Dixie." Big Ten raises himself up slightly to look.



"It's our outfit, all right," he says, ducking back down. "Couple hundred yards back, out in front of the fort."

"Somebody ought to tell them this isn't over yet."

"I'd aim at the tuba, I was them," says Big Ten, nodding toward the bamboo thicket. "Knock out the heavy artillery first."

A Moment in the Sun **by John Sayles (McSweeney's, $29)**

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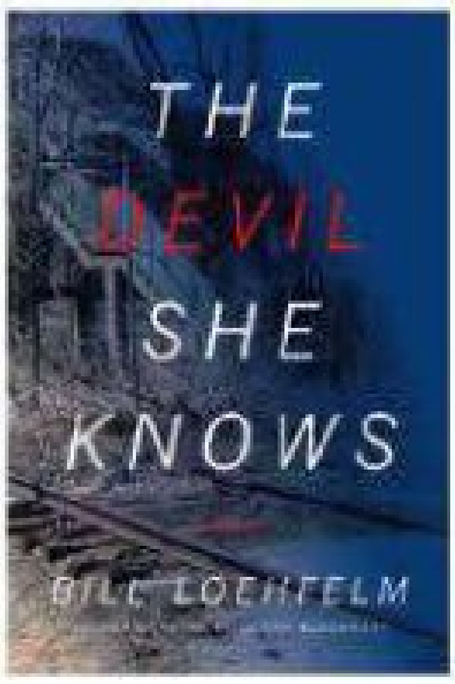
Crime Novel

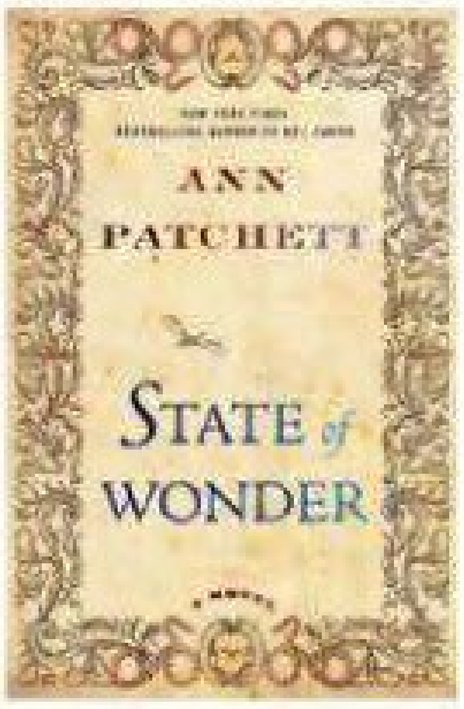
Blood. Maureen sniffed again at the dark smears on her fingertips. Pungent sweetness and a hint of iron. Definitely blood. Not the answer she'd hoped for, but the fresh stains couldn't be anything else. She studied the spray pattern of red dots peppering the outside of her windowsill. That's the effect of sharp teeth, she thought, punching holes through skin. She hadn't seen or heard anything, a surprise, since she'd only left the kitchen for a few moments to answer the phone. Nothing left of the body but what looked like sticky feathers. The culprit sat in plain sight. These attacks had to stop.



The Devil She Knows **by Bill Loehfelm (Farrar, Straus and Giroux, $26)**

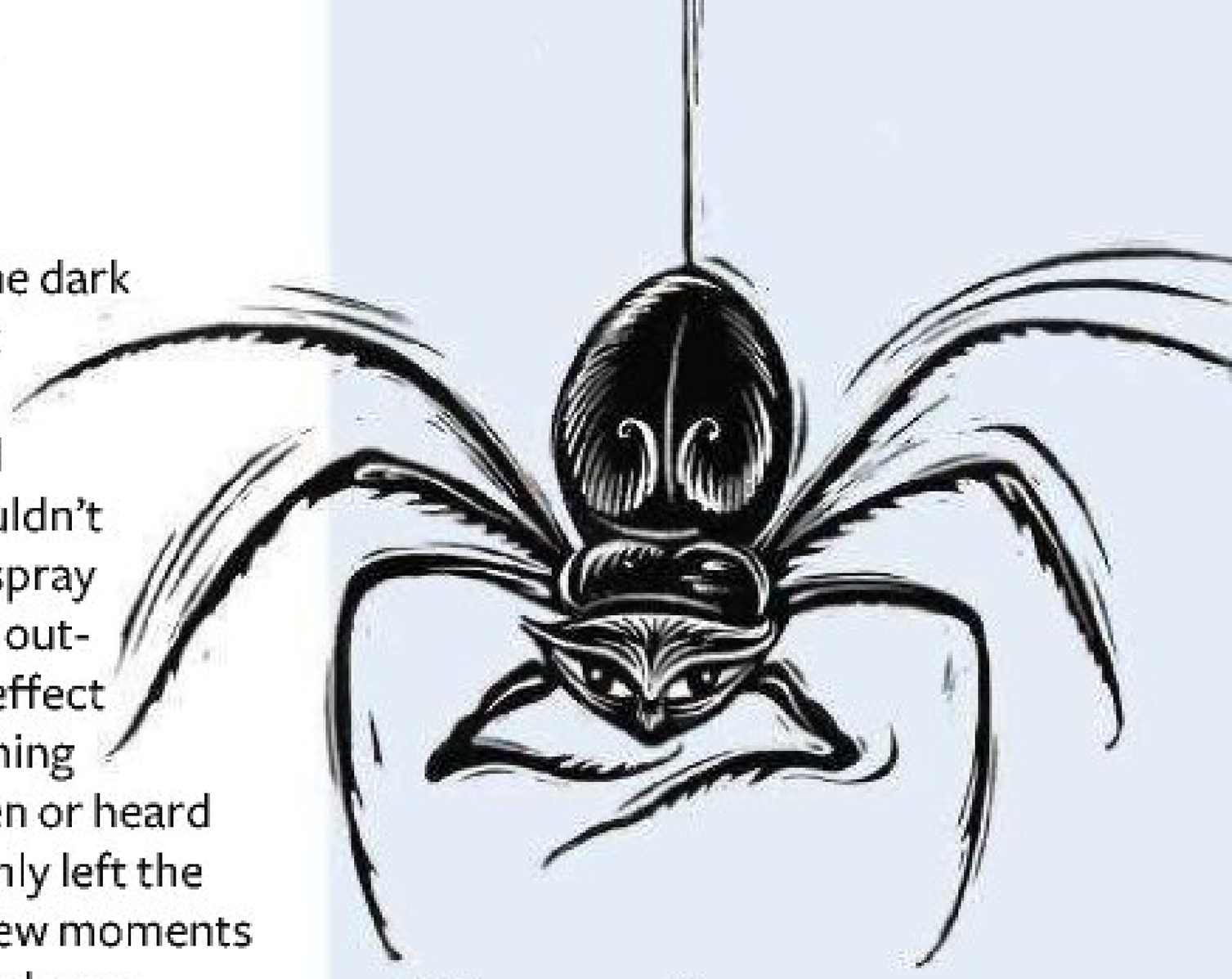
Literary Novel

The news of Anders Eckman's death came by way of Aerogram, a piece of bright blue airmail paper that served as both the stationery and, when folded over and sealed along the edges, the envelope. Who even knew they made such things? This single sheet had traveled from Brazil to Minnesota to mark the passing of a man, a breath of tissue so insubstantial that only the stamp seemed to anchor it to this world. Mr. Fox had the letter in his hand when he came to the lab to tell Marina the news. When she saw him there at the door, she smiled at him, and in the light of that smile he faltered.



State of Wonder **by Ann Patchett (Harper, $26.99)**

ILLUSTRATED BY CATHIE BLECK



Biography

On summer nights Elwyn liked to sit on the front steps after dark. His was a quiet and safe neighborhood where each family knew the others on the block, and as the heat of day faded, many people could be found strolling along the street or sitting on a porch and chatting. Elwyn would let his mind wander and his senses fill up with the sounds and smells of the safe, domesticated darkness around him. He could hear the clip-clop of carriage horses on their way to unknown destinations, the frenzied and exciting roar of an automobile a few blocks away, and feel the breeze that rustled the trees and hedge, where birds and squirrels and other animals lived lives so different from his own.

The Story of Charlotte's Web: E. B. White's Eccentric Life in Nature and the Birth of an American Classic **by Michael Sims (Walker & Company, $24)**

IPAD EXTRA To read chapters from all six of these books, download the *Reader's Digest* magazine app from the iTunes Store.

FloridaFF.com

WHAT I'M UP TO

Suze Orman

Author, certified financial planner, motivational speaker, empire builder, and former waitress at the Buttercup Bakery

INTERVIEW BY DAWN RAFFEL

WHAT SHE'S LISTENING TO

"I need to get my iPhone out so I can tell you my playlist. Okay, you're going to die at this: Black-Eyed Peas, 'The Time.' BlackEyed Peas and Justin Timberlake, 'Where Is the Love?' Taio Cruz, 'Dynamite.' Enrique Iglesias, 'I Like It.' Katy Perry, 'Teenage Dream' and 'Firework.' Ke$ha, 'We R Who We R.' Lady Antebellum, 'Need You Now.' Pink, 'Raise Your Glass.' I listen all the time."

WHERE SHE'S SURFING

"Embarrassing, but abc.com if I've missed *Dancing with the Stars* or *The Bachelor*."

Her **READER'S DIGEST VERSION** of life and work:

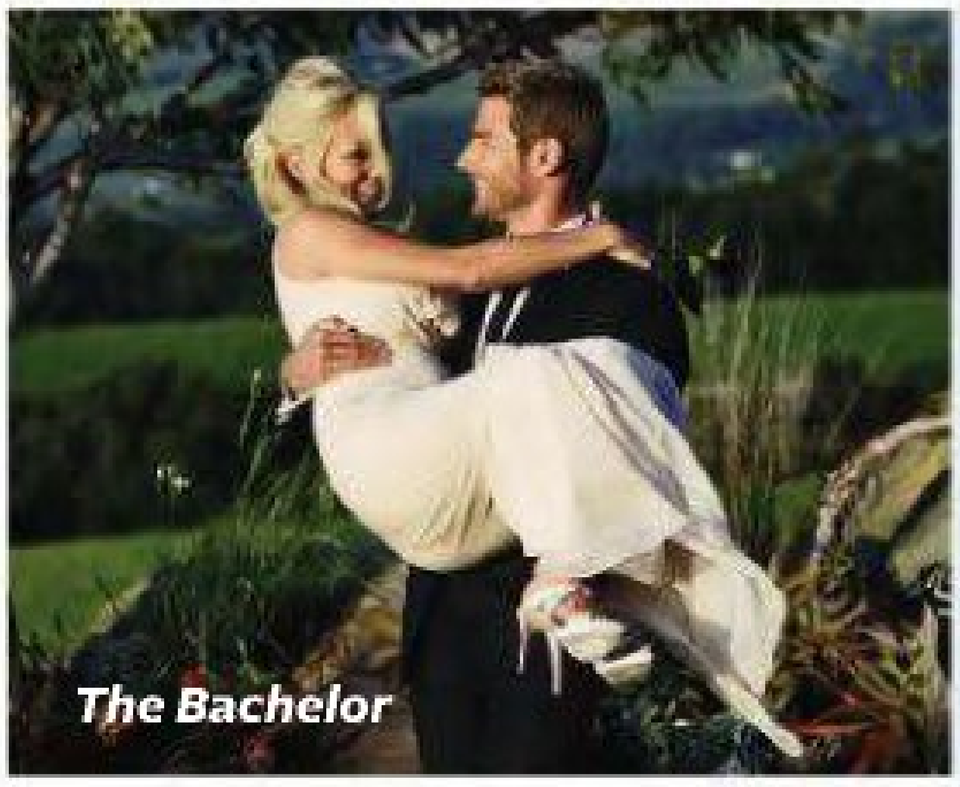
"When you can be as happy in your sadness as you are in your happiness, then you know the key to life. If something bad happens, you accept it because you have true faith that everything really does happen for the best."

IF SHE RULED THE WORLD, SHE WOULD ...

"Get rid of credit cards."

WHAT SHE'S PLUGGING

"My new book, *The Money Class: Learn to Create Your New American Dream*. It will allow you to live a life in which you say 'I'm glad I did' instead of 'I wish I hadn't.'"



WHAT SHE'S WATCHING

"CNBC and CNN, 100 percent of the time. Except, you know, when *American Idol* and *The Bachelor* are on. I also love movies. My all-time favorite movie is *The Last Lions*. It should be mandatory for every single person to see because it will teach you what it takes to win against all odds. Fabulous, fabulous, fabulous."

ILLUSTRATED BY GRAFILU; MARK WESSELS/ABC

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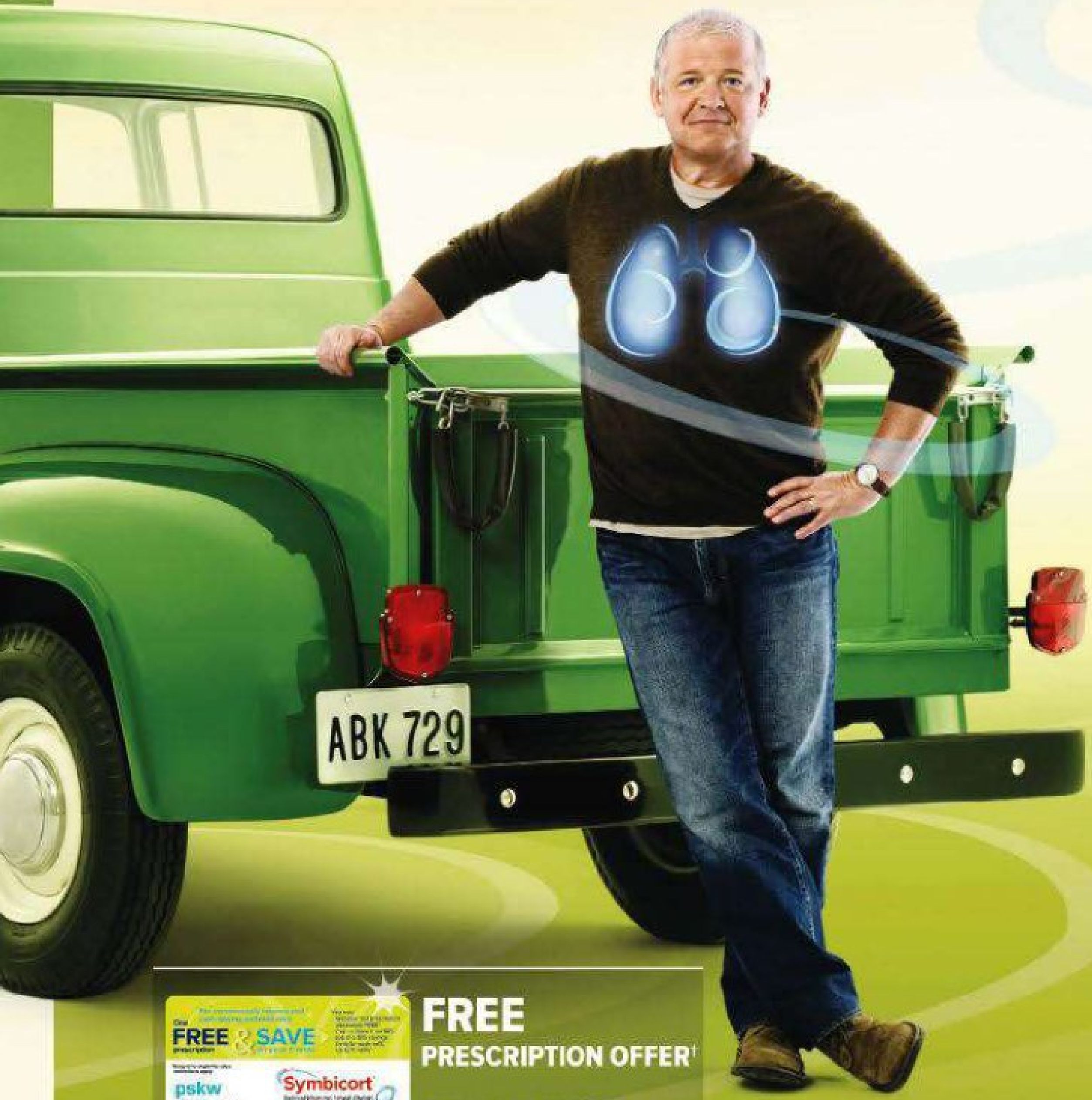
COPD left me short of breath.

Now I take SYMBICORT. 160/4.5



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It's a maintenance medication that helps significantly improve my lung function starting within 5 minutes. And it makes a significant difference in my breathing.*

* Results may vary.

Remember, SYMBICORT does not replace a rescue inhaler for sudden symptoms.

Talk to your doctor about SYMBICORT today.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT SYMBICORT

Important Safety Information about SYMBICORT 160/4.5 for COPD

Call your health care provider if you notice any of the following symptoms: change in amount or color of sputum, fever, chills, increased cough, or increased breathing problems. People with COPD may have a higher chance of pneumonia.

SYMBICORT does not replace rescue inhalers for sudden symptoms.

Be sure to tell your health care provider about all your health conditions, including heart conditions or high blood pressure, and all medicines you may be taking. Some patients taking SYMBICORT may experience increased blood pressure, heart rate, or change in heart rhythm.

Do not use SYMBICORT more often than prescribed. While taking SYMBICORT, never use another medicine containing a LABA for any reason. Ask your health care provider or pharmacist if any of your other medicines are LABA medicines, as using too much LABA may cause chest pain, increase in blood pressure, fast and irregular heartbeat, headache, tremor, and nervousness.

Patients taking SYMBICORT should call their health care provider or get emergency medical care:

- if you experience serious allergic reactions including rash, hives, swelling of the face, mouth and tongue, and breathing problems.
- if you think you are exposed to infections such as chicken pox or measles, or if you have any signs of infection. You may have a higher chance of infection.
- if you experience an increase in wheezing right after taking SYMBICORT, eye problems including glaucoma and cataracts, decreases in bone mineral density, swelling of blood vessels (signs include a feeling of pins and needles or numbness of arms or legs, flu like symptoms, rash, pain and swelling of the sinuses), decrease in blood potassium, and increase in blood sugar levels.

If you are switching to SYMBICORT from an oral corticosteroid, follow your health care provider's instructions to avoid serious health risks when you stop using oral corticosteroids.

Common side effects include inflammation of the nasal passages and throat, thrush in the mouth and throat, bronchitis, sinusitis, and upper respiratory tract infection.

Approved Uses for COPD

SYMBICORT 160/4.5 is for adults with COPD, including chronic bronchitis and emphysema. You should only take 2 inhalations of SYMBICORT twice a day. Higher doses will not provide additional benefits.

Please see Important Product Information on adjacent page and discuss with your doctor.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

For more information, go to MYSymbicort.com/GO or call 1-888-533-2983

If you are without prescription coverage and can't afford your medication, AstraZeneca may be able to help. For more information, please visit www.astrazeneca-us.com

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(budesonide/formoterol fumarate dihydrate) Inhalation Aerosol

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Please read this summary carefully and then ask your doctor about SYMBICORT.

No advertisement can provide all the information needed to determine if a drug is right for you or take the place of careful discussions with your health care provider. Only your health care provider has the training to weigh the risks and benefits of a prescription drug.

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION I SHOULD KNOW ABOUT SYMBICORT?

People with asthma who take long-acting beta$_2$-agonist (LABA) medicines, such as formoterol (one of the medicines in SYMBICORT), have an increased risk of death from asthma problems. It is not known whether budesonide, the other medicine in SYMBICORT, reduces the risk of death from asthma problems seen with formoterol.

SYMBICORT should be used only if your health care provider decides that your asthma is not well controlled with a long-term asthma control medicine, such as an inhaled corticosteroid, or that your asthma is severe enough to begin treatment with SYMBICORT.

Talk with your health care provider about this risk and the benefits of treating your asthma with SYMBICORT.

If you are taking SYMBICORT, see your health care provider if your asthma does not improve or gets worse. It is important that your health care provider assess your asthma control on a regular basis. Your doctor will decide if it is possible for you to stop taking SYMBICORT and start taking a long-term asthma control medicine without loss of asthma control.

Get emergency medical care if:

- breathing problems worsen quickly, and
- you use your rescue inhaler medicine, but it does not relieve your breathing problems.

Children and adolescents who take LABA medicines may be at increased risk of being hospitalized for asthma problems.

What is SYMBICORT?

SYMBICORT is an inhaled prescription medicine used for asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). It contains two medicines:

- Budesonide (the same medicine found in Pulmicort Flexhaler™, an inhaled corticosteroid). Inhaled corticosteroids help to decrease inflammation in the lungs. Inflammation in the lungs can lead to asthma symptoms
- Formoterol (the same medicine found in Foradil® Aerolizer®). LABA medicines are used in patients with COPD and asthma to help the muscles in the airways of your lungs stay relaxed to prevent asthma symptoms, such as wheezing and shortness of breath. These symptoms can happen when the muscles in the airways tighten. This makes it hard to breathe, which, in severe cases, can cause breathing to stop completely if not treated right away

SYMBICORT is used for asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease as follows:

Asthma

SYMBICORT is used to control symptoms of asthma and prevent symptoms such as wheezing in adults and children ages 12 and older.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

COPD is a chronic lung disease that includes chronic bronchitis, emphysema, or both. SYMBICORT 160/4.5 mcg is used long term, two times each day, to help improve lung function for better breathing in adults with COPD.

WHO SHOULD NOT USE SYMBICORT?

Do not use SYMBICORT to treat sudden severe symptoms of asthma or COPD or if you are allergic to any of the ingredients in SYMBICORT.

Visit **www.MySymbicort.com**
Or, call **1-866-SYMBICORT**

Symbicort
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WHAT SHOULD I TELL MY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER BEFORE USING SYMBICORT?

Tell your health care provider about all of your health conditions, including if you:

- **have heart problems**
- **have high blood pressure**
- **have seizures**
- **have thyroid problems**
- **have diabetes**
- **have liver problems**
- **have osteoporosis**
- **have an immune system problem**
- **have eye problems such as increased pressure in the eye, glaucoma, or cataracts**
- **are allergic to any medicines**
- **are exposed to chicken pox or measles**
- **are pregnant or planning to become pregnant.** It is not known if SYMBICORT may harm your unborn baby
- **are breast-feeding.** Budesonide, one of the active ingredients in SYMBICORT, passes into breast milk. You and your health care provider should decide if you will take SYMBICORT while breast-feeding

Tell your health care provider about all the medicines you take including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. SYMBICORT and certain other medicines may interact with each other and can cause serious side effects. Know all the medicines you take. Keep a list and show it to your health care provider and pharmacist each time you get a new medicine.

HOW DO I USE SYMBICORT?

Do not use SYMBICORT unless your health care provider has taught you and you understand everything. Ask your health care provider or pharmacist if you have any questions.

Use SYMBICORT exactly as prescribed. **Do not use SYMBICORT more often than prescribed.** SYMBICORT comes in two strengths for asthma: 80/4.5 mcg and 160/4.5 mcg. Your health care provider will prescribe the strength that is best for you. SYMBICORT 160/4.5 mcg is the approved dosage for COPD.

- SYMBICORT should be taken every day as 2 puffs in the morning and 2 puffs in the evening.
- Rinse your mouth with water and spit the water out after each dose (2 puffs) of SYMBICORT. This will help lessen the chance of getting a fungus infection (thrush) in the mouth and throat.
- Do not spray SYMBICORT in your eyes. If you accidentally get SYMBICORT in your eyes, rinse your eyes with water. If redness or irritation persists, call your health care provider.
- Do not change or stop any medicines used to control or treat your breathing problems. Your health care provider will change your medicines as needed
- **While you are using SYMBICORT 2 times each day, do not use other medicines that contain a long-acting beta$_2$-agonist (LABA) for any reason. Ask your health care provider or pharmacist if any of your other medicines are LABA medicines.**
- SYMBICORT does not relieve sudden symptoms. Always have a rescue inhaler medicine with you to treat sudden symptoms. If you do not have a rescue inhaler, call your health care provider to have one prescribed for you.

Call your health care provider or get medical care right away if:

- your breathing problems worsen with SYMBICORT
- you need to use your rescue inhaler medicine more often than usual
- your rescue inhaler does not work as well for you at relieving symptoms
- you need to use 4 or more inhalations of your rescue inhaler medicine for 2 or more days in a row

Visit **www.MySymbicort.com**
Or, call **1-866-SYMBICORT**

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- you use one whole canister of your rescue inhaler medicine in 8 weeks' time
- your peak flow meter results decrease. Your health care provider will tell you the numbers that are right for you
- your symptoms do not improve after using SYMBICORT regularly for 1 week

WHAT MEDICATIONS SHOULD I NOT TAKE WHEN USING SYMBICORT?

While you are using SYMBICORT, do not use other medicines that contain a long-acting beta$_2$-agonist (LABA) for any reason, such as:

- Serevent® Diskus® (salmeterol xinafoate inhalation powder)
- Advair Diskus® or Advair® HFA (fluticasone propionate and salmeterol)
- Formoterol-containing products such as Foradil Aerolizer, Brovana®, or Perforomist®

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS WITH SYMBICORT?

SYMBICORT can cause serious side effects.

- Increased risk of pneumonia and other lower respiratory tract infections if you have COPD. Call your health care provider if you notice any of these symptoms: increase in mucus production, change in mucus color, fever, chills, increased cough, increased breathing problems
- Serious allergic reactions including rash; hives; swelling of the face, mouth and tongue; and breathing problems. Call your health care provider or get emergency care if you get any of these symptoms
- Immune system effects and a higher chance for infections
- Adrenal insufficiency–a condition in which the adrenal glands do not make enough steroid hormones
- Cardiovascular and central nervous system effects of LABAs, such as chest pain, increased blood pressure, fast or irregular heartbeat, tremor, or nervousness
- Increased wheezing right after taking SYMBICORT
- Eye problems, including glaucoma and cataracts. You should have regular eye exams while using SYMBICORT
- Osteoporosis. People at risk for increased bone loss may have a greater risk with SYMBICORT
- Slowed growth in children. As a result, growth should be carefully monitored
- Swelling of your blood vessels. This can happen in people with asthma
- Decreases in blood potassium levels and increases in blood sugar levels

WHAT ARE COMMON SIDE EFFECTS OF SYMBICORT?

Patients with Asthma

Sore throat, headache, upper respiratory tract infection, thrush in the mouth and throat

Patients with COPD

Thrush in the mouth and throat

These are not all the side effects with SYMBICORT. Ask your health care provider or pharmacist for more information.

NOTE: This summary provides important information about SYMBICORT. For more information, please ask your doctor or health care provider.

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The Plots Thicken

- **Our hero:** Pam Sloane, 67
- **Where she lives:** Old Greenwich, Connecticut
- **How she helps:** Growing the school garden movement

When Pam Sloane, a French teacher at Dolan Middle School in Stamford, Connecticut, was offered the chance to plant a small garden on school grounds in 2008, she jumped at it. So much so that she sort of overdid it. In her enthusiasm, and with the help of the school garden club, she put in more than 20 different fruits, vegetables, and herbs, including strawberry and tomato plants, potatoes, and parsley. "If someone gave us a packet of seeds, we planted them," says Sloane. When the plants grew, she says, "the tall ones shielded the short ones from the sun."

Nevertheless, the garden managed to be a huge success. The harvest was divided between the kids' homes and the school's kitchen, where

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The Power of 1

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH **AmericanTowns**

IPAD EXTRA To watch an exclusive video of Sloane and the kids, download the *Reader's Digest* magazine app from the iTunes Store.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY NATHANIEL WELCH/REDUX

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Sloane used it to teach cooking classes. "You know you've done something when middle schoolers are excited about vegetable soup," says Sloane. Encouraged, she launched the Green Initiative for Vegetables in Education (GIVE) last year to inspire nearby schools to start gardens. "Before I knew it, 20 schools had contacted me," she says. In her director's role, Sloane advises the schools on plotting seedbeds and helps them hunt down discounted supplies. City and local tree services donate and deliver compost and wood chips, and private donations make up the rest.

"Several people have said that if I hadn't started GIVE, their school garden wouldn't have happened," says Sloane, who learned to garden during summers spent on a farm. "To me, it's all about helping kids appreciate what the land does for us."

Beth Dreher

For more information about Pam Sloane and other innovative green projects, go to greentowns.com.

Putting Down Roots

- **Our hero:** Charlie Starbuck, 74
- **Where he lives:** San Francisco, California
- **How he helps:** Planting city trees

Walk a block or two in almost any neighborhood in San Francisco and you can tell Charlie Starbuck has been there. His fingerprints might be on a Brisbane box tree, a bronze loquat, a primrose, or a purple leaf plum. Whatever the species of tree, chances are excellent that Starbuck put his hands in the dirt and helped plant it.

"It's the before and after," Starbuck says. "That's what it's about for me."

A soft-spoken gentleman fond of berets, Starbuck began noticing San Francisco's dearth of trees after moving to the city in the 1960s. Through a friend, he heard about the citywide Friends of the Urban Forest (FUF) tree-planting program and has been volunteering since 1981—almost 30 years of weekly plantings, without pay, come rain or shine.

"He's our rock," says Doug Wildman, program director of FUF.

The average tree planting is 30 trees per outing, though 60- and even 90-tree plantings occur from time to time. Starbuck acts as a guide and teacher to the homeowners and volunteers. "You change so much in one morning," he says. "It's an emotional high for me."

In the past year, FUF planted some 1,000 new trees—with Starbuck's help, of course. "He's done it in such a modest way," another volunteer, Michael Sullivan, says of Starbuck. "Week after week. He's the Lou Gehrig of tree planting."

Paul Van Slambrouck, Christian Science Monitor

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A Fine Bouquet

- **Our hero:** Nancy Lawlor, 40
- **Where she lives:** New York, New York
- **How she helps:** Wielding the power of flowers

Nancy Lawlor collects bouquets—flowers from hotels and weddings and corporate events, in cities like New York and Los Angeles. Then she gives them away to people in need, often breaking down larger bouquets so there's more to go around.

Lawlor was inspired to start her nonprofit organization, FlowerPower, eight years ago. Sitting in the lobby of the Waldorf Astoria, she was riveted by its towering floral displays. Where did they go at the end of the day? After getting her answer—a Dumpster—Lawlor volunteered to take them away instead. Once the hotel agreed, Lawlor delivered $2,000 worth of large pink bouquets to a New York City hospital. "It all started with one person saying yes," she says.

Lawlor on a visit to a veterans hospital patient

To date, FlowerPower has distributed more than $2.5 million worth of flowers to hospitals, rape crisis centers, and rehabilitation clinics. The bouquets last several days, giving patients a healthy dose of good cheer. "I've seen thousands of people transformed," she says, "all over a simple bouquet of flowers that originally would've been thrown away." Now, that's a beautiful arrangement.

Natalie van der Meer

We Heard You, America!

The "We Hear You, America" national tour is due to roll its RV into the last town on its itinerary on May 16. Since its start on January 18, the online contest garnered more than 17 million cheers, or votes (at press time). Nearly half of the towns and cities in the nation participated, vying for prize money to give their towns an economic boost. For information on the winning towns, go to readersdigest.com or the *Reader's Digest* Facebook page.

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Big Cat Keeper

- **Our hero:** Laurie Marker, 56
- **Where she lives:** Otjiwarongo, Namibia
- **How she helps:** Saving Africa's cheetahs

It takes an unusual mind to bring a wood chipper to the desert. But in her 37-year quest to help save Africa's most endangered big cat—the cheetah—Laurie Marker is used to taking unusual steps.

Cheetahs, which move at speeds of up to 70 mph, were being blinded when they ran through the thick, prickly thornbush that is taking over Namibia's farm- and grasslands. Unable to hunt wild game, the injured cats would then prey on livestock, causing farmers to trap them. Marker's solution: Send in the wood chippers to chop up the brush.

The chipped thornbush is now turned into "ecoblocks," which are sold as fuel in South Africa and Europe. Studies show that both cheetahs and displaced leopards are returning to the cleared areas.

While living in Oregon in the 1970s, Marker worked at a wildlife refuge and raised a tiger and a cheetah from infancy. They stayed with her in her mother's guest bedroom when Marker took them on educational tours of schools in Northern California. In 1991, Marker left for Namibia, a year after founding the Cheetah Conservation Fund (CCF).

"The cheetah—that's her passion," says Gregg Hudson, executive director of the Dallas Zoo in Texas and former CCF board member.

"They're so regal," Marker says of the endangered cat, "and they're so smart. Cheetahs are the health of our ecosystem. If you knew a cheetah, you'd be as involved as I am."

Yvonne Zipp, Christian Science Monitor

Visit cheetah.org to learn more about Marker's work and the CCF.

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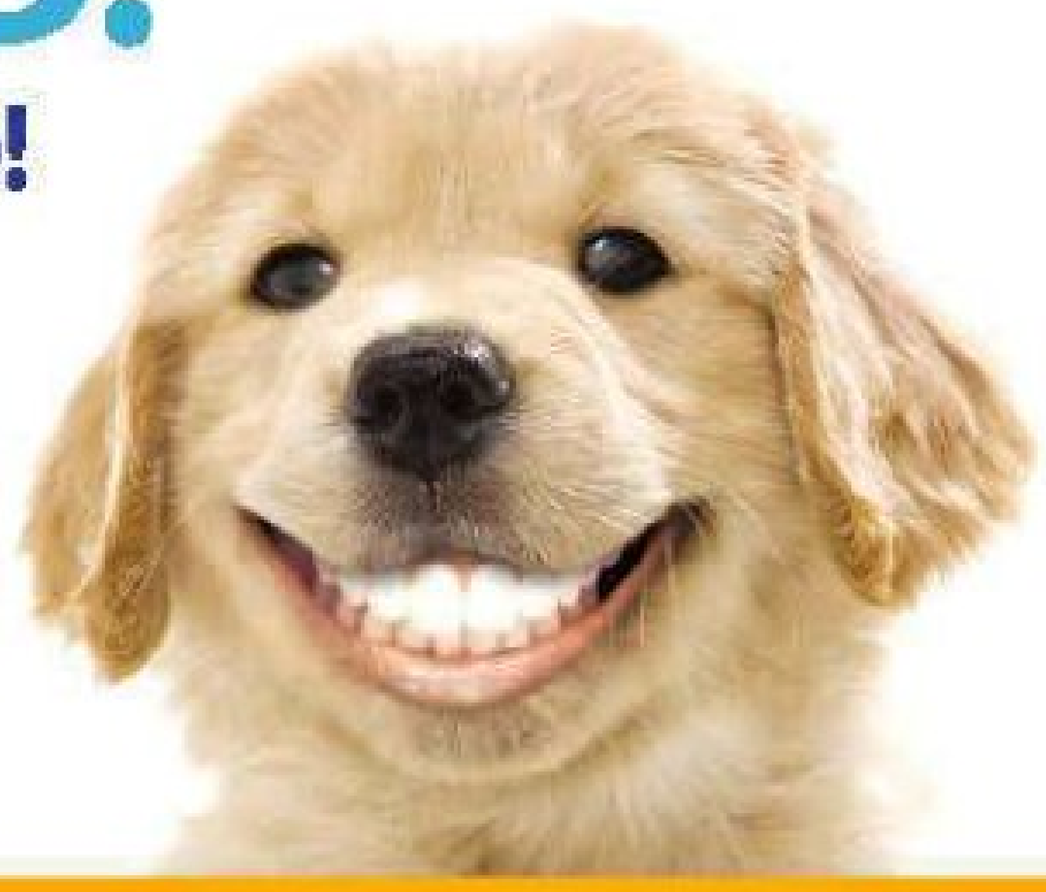

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Around the World
WITH ONE QUESTION

What's Your Worst Habit?

Much of the world is watching its weight, according to this month's global poll: Nine out of 16 countries chose overeating as their most vexing vice—before procrastinating, complaining, and smoking. (Even the French, who take pride in being effortlessly sleek, admitted they fret about stuffing themselves!) Meanwhile, procrastinating came in as a close second, with six countries choosing it (startling only in that the dawdlers were quick to respond). The biggest surprise: *Not one country* ranked smoking as its overall worst habit. That's a head-scratcher, since the World Health Organization estimates that globally, ten million cigarettes are sold every minute.

"Overeating. Delectable foods and snacks—chocolate, in particular—are too tempting to resist."

Carman Chan, 22,
Hong Kong, China

"I hate when I complain. It makes me feel so out of control."

Scott Lee, 32,
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

"Although I have this nagging feeling I should finish a task that's waiting to be done, I keep putting it off."

Maaike Tinneveit, 40,
Mook, Netherlands

IPAD EXTRA To see how different countries answer our question, download the *Reader's Digest* magazine app from the iTunes Store.

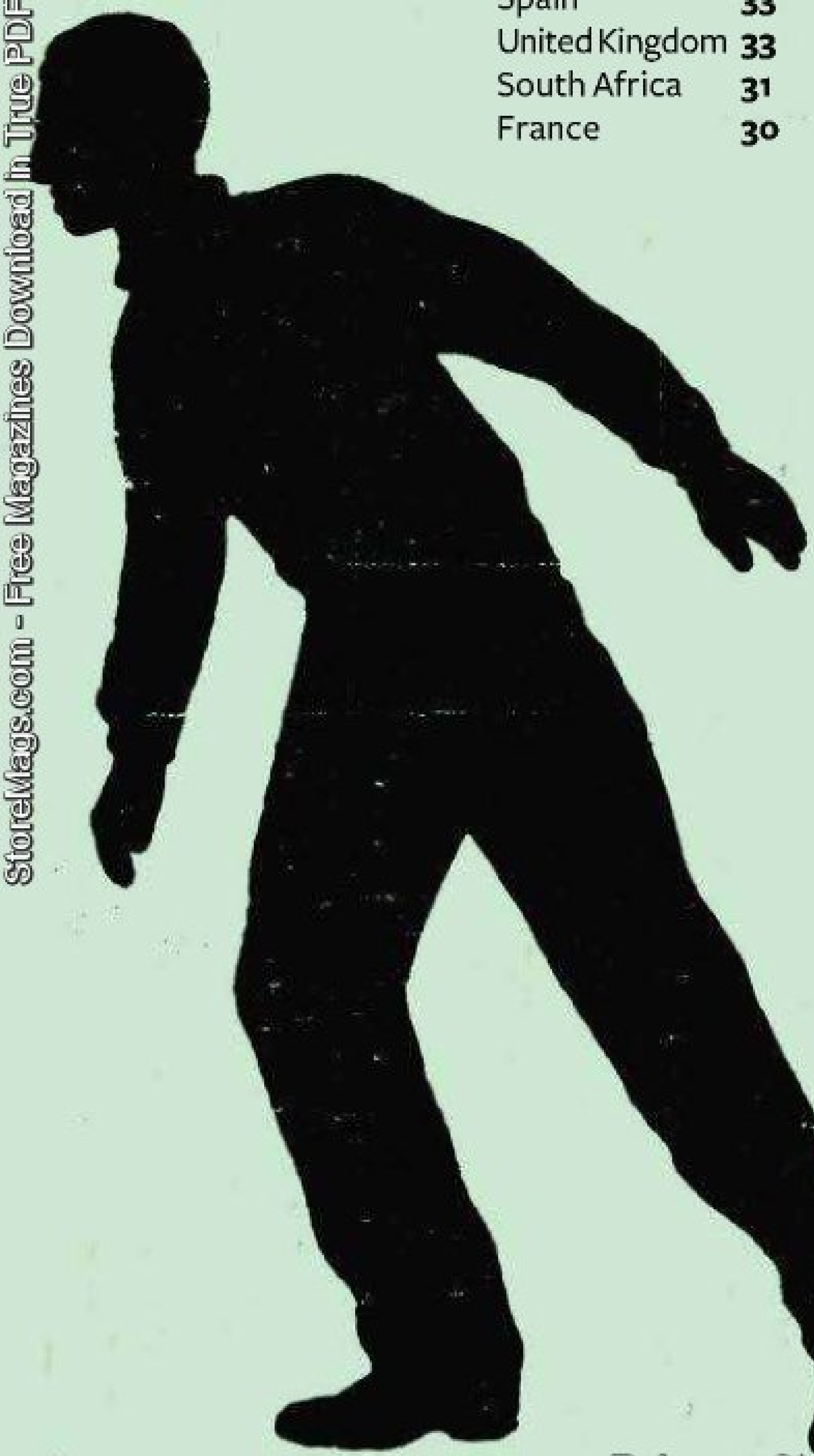
ILLUSTRATED BY DAN PAGE

Procrastinating was No. 1 in:

Russia	50%
Australia	45
Netherlands	41
United States	40
Canada	36
Germany	36

Overeating was No. 1 in:

Brazil	53%
China	42
Philippines	42
Mexico	35
India	34
Spain	33
United Kingdom	33
South Africa	31
France	30



AHEAD OF THE PACK

Least likely to fret about lighting up: Indian women, at zero percent.

DEPARTMENT OF COMPLAINTS

Malaysia was the only country where a majority of people admitted that complaining was their biggest vice.

WOMEN TAKE THE CAKE

Worldwide, women were more concerned than men about watching their waistline. One of two exceptions? The United States, where men outstripped women in anxiety about overeating.

TOMORROW'S ANOTHER DAY

In three quarters of all the countries polled, younger respondents said they worry about procrastination much more than did those over 45. The group most likely to miss a deadline: Russian men.

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PRISTIQ® (desvenlafaxine) is a prescription medication approved for the treatment of major depressive disorder in adults.

Important Safety Information About PRISTIQ®

Suicidality and Antidepressant Drugs
Antidepressants increased the risk compared to placebo of suicidal thinking and behavior (suicidality) in children, teens, and young adults. Depression and certain other psychiatric disorders are themselves associated with increases in the risk of suicide. Patients of all ages who are started on antidepressant therapy or when the dose is changed should be monitored appropriately and observed closely for clinical worsening, suicidality, or unusual changes in behavior such as becoming agitated, irritable, hostile, aggressive, impulsive, or restless. Should these occur, report them to a doctor. PRISTIQ is not approved for use in children under 18.

People taking MAOIs should not take PRISTIQ. Tell your healthcare professional about all prescription and over-the-counter medications you are taking or plan to take, including: medicines to treat migraines or psychiatric disorders, to avoid a potentially life-threatening condition; and aspirin, NSAID pain relievers, or blood thinners because they may increase the risk of bleeding.

PRISTIQ may cause or make some conditions worse, so tell your healthcare professional about all your medical conditions, including:

- High blood pressure, which should be controlled before you start taking PRISTIQ and monitored regularly
- Heart problems, high cholesterol or triglyceride levels, or a history of stroke, glaucoma or increased eye pressure, kidney or liver problems, or have low sodium levels in your blood
- Mania, bipolar disorder, or seizures or convulsions
- If nursing, pregnant, or plan to become pregnant

Discontinuation symptoms may occur when stopping or reducing PRISTIQ, so talk to your healthcare professional before stopping or changing your dose of PRISTIQ. Until you see how PRISTIQ affects you, be careful driving a car or operating machinery. Avoid drinking alcohol while taking PRISTIQ. Side effects when taking PRISTIQ 50 mg may include nausea, dizziness, sweating, constipation, and decreased appetite.

Please see Brief Summary of Prescribing Information on next page.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Pristiq® desvenlafaxine
EXTENDED-RELEASE TABLETS

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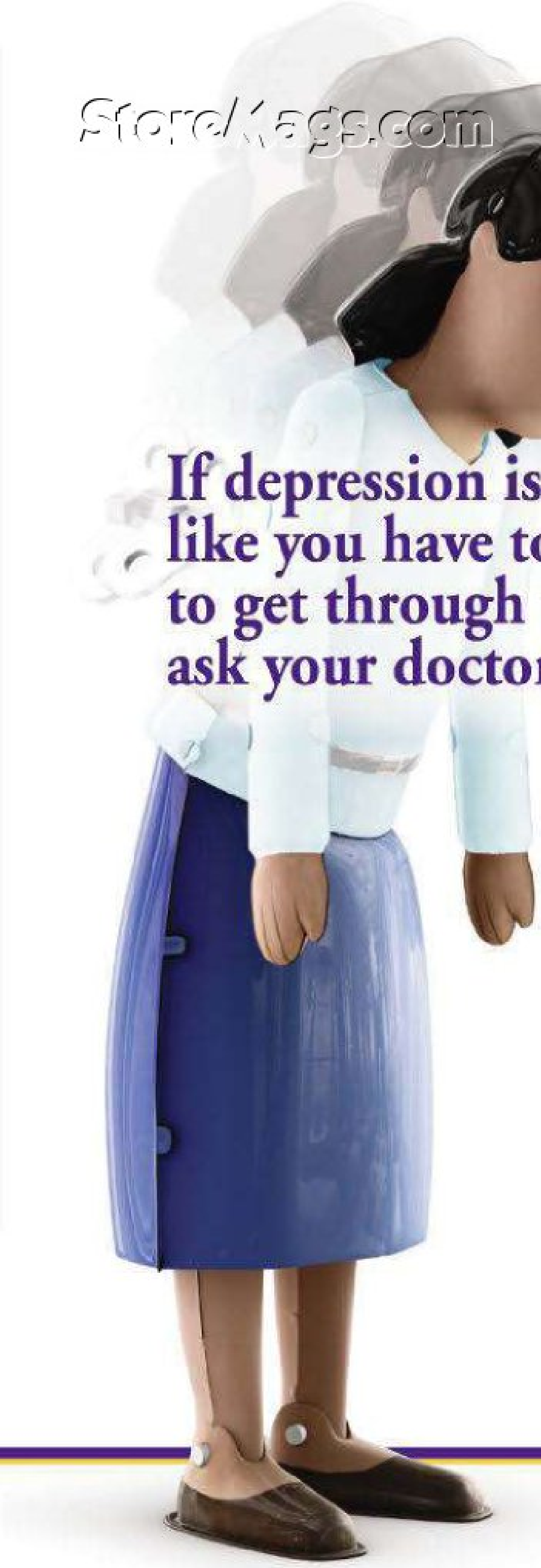
January 2011

PQP00320A

Freedrugs.com



If depression is making you feel like you have to wind yourself up to get through the day, ask your doctor about Pristiq.

Depression is a serious medical condition that can take so much out of you. The sadness, trouble concentrating, and loss of interest can be overwhelming. You may even feel like you have no energy to keep going. Pristiq may be able to help you. Pristiq is believed to work on two chemicals in the brain, serotonin and norepinephrine. Talk to your doctor. Ask if Pristiq could be a key in treating your depression.

Pristiq® desvenlafaxine
EXTENDED-RELEASE TABLETS

Visit Pristiq.com or call 1-800-PRISTIQ (1-800-774-7847)

IMPORTANT FACTS ABOUT

Pristiq®

desvenlafaxine

EXTENDED-RELEASE TABLETS

(pris•teek')
Pristiq® - (desvenlafaxine) Extended-Release Tablets

Read the Medication Guide that comes with you or your family member's antidepressant medicine. Talk to your, or your family member's, healthcare provider about:

- all risks and benefits of treatment with antidepressant medicines
- all treatment choices for depression or other serious mental illness

What is the most important information I should know about antidepressant medicines, depression and other serious mental illnesses, and suicidal thoughts or actions?

1. Antidepressant medicines may increase suicidal thoughts or actions in some children, teenagers, and young adults within the first few months of treatment.

2. Depression and other serious mental illnesses are the most important causes of suicidal thoughts and actions. Some people may have a particularly high risk of having suicidal thoughts or actions. These include people who have (or have a family history of) bipolar illness (also called manic-depressive illness) or suicidal thoughts or actions.

3. How can I watch for and try to prevent suicidal thoughts and actions in myself or a family member?

- Pay close attention to any changes, especially sudden changes, in mood, behaviors, thoughts, or feelings. This is very important when an antidepressant medicine is started or when the dose is changed.
- Call the healthcare provider right away to report new or sudden changes in mood, behavior, thoughts, or feelings.
- Keep all follow-up visits with the healthcare provider as scheduled. Call the healthcare provider between visits as needed, especially if you have concerns about symptoms.

Call a healthcare provider right away if you or your family member has any of the following symptoms, especially if they are new, worse, or worry you:

- thoughts about suicide or dying
- trouble sleeping (insomnia)
- attempts to commit suicide
- new or worse irritability
- new or worse depression
- acting aggressive, being angry or violent
- new or worse anxiety
- acting on dangerous impulses
- feeling very agitated or restless
- an extreme increase in activity and talking (mania)
- panic attacks
- other unusual changes in behavior or mood

What else do I need to know about antidepressant medicines?

- **Never stop an antidepressant medicine without first talking to a healthcare provider.** Stopping an antidepressant medicine suddenly can cause other symptoms.
- **Antidepressants are medicines used to treat depression and other illnesses.** It is important to discuss all the risks of treating depression and also the risks of not treating it. Patients and their families or other caregivers should discuss all treatment choices with the healthcare provider, not just the use of antidepressants.
- **Antidepressant medicines have other side effects.** Talk to the healthcare provider about the side effects of the medicine prescribed for you or your family member.
- **Antidepressant medicines can interact with other medicines.** Know all of the medicines that you or your family member takes. Keep a list of all medicines to show the healthcare provider. Do not start new medicines without first checking with your healthcare provider.
- **Not all antidepressant medicines prescribed for children are FDA approved for use in children.** Talk to your child's healthcare provider for more information.

Important Information about Pristiq

Read the patient information that comes with Pristiq before you take Pristiq and each time you refill your prescription. There may be new information. If you have questions, ask your healthcare provider. This information does not take the place of talking with your healthcare provider about your medical condition or treatment.

What is Pristiq?

- Pristiq is a prescription medicine used to treat depression. Pristiq belongs to a class of medicines known as SNRIs (or serotonin-norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors).
- Pristiq is not approved for use in children and adolescents.

Who should not take Pristiq?

Do not take Pristiq if you:

- are allergic to desvenlafaxine, venlafaxine or any of the ingredients in Pristiq.
- currently take, or have taken within the last 14 days, any medicine known as an MAOI. Taking an MAOI with certain other medicines, including Pristiq, can cause serious or even life-threatening side effects. Also, you must wait at least 7 days after you stop taking Pristiq before you take any MAOI.

What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking Pristiq?

Tell your healthcare provider about all your medical conditions, including if you:

- have high blood pressure
- have heart problems
- have high cholesterol or high triglycerides
- have a history of stroke
- have glaucoma
- have kidney problems
- have liver problems
- have or had bleeding problems
- have or had seizures or convulsions
- have mania or bipolar disorder
- have low sodium levels in your blood
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if Pristiq will harm your unborn baby.
- are breastfeeding. Pristiq can pass into your breast milk and may harm your baby. Talk with your healthcare provider about the best way to feed your baby if you take Pristiq.
- **Serotonin syndrome or neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS)-like reactions:**

Rare, but potentially life-threatening, conditions called serotonin syndrome or Neuroleptic Malignant Syndrome (NMS)-like reactions can happen when medicines such as Pristiq are taken with certain other medicines.

Based on PI W10529C017
PQP00320A

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Serotonin syndrome or NMS-like reactions can cause serious changes in how your brain, muscles, heart and blood vessels, and digestive system work.

Especially tell your healthcare provider if you take the following:

- medicines to treat migraine headaches known as triptans
- St. John's Wort
- MAOIs (including linezolid, an antibiotic)
- tryptophan supplements
- sibutramine
- tramadol
- medicines used to treat mood, anxiety, psychotic, or thought disorders, including tricyclics, lithium, selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs), or serotonin norepinephrine reuptake inhibitors (SNRIs), antipsychotic drugs, or other dopamine antagonists, such as metoclopramide

Ask your healthcare provider if you are not sure whether you are taking any of these medicines.

Before you take Pristiq with any of these medicines, talk to your healthcare provider about serotonin syndrome. See "What are the possible side effects of Pristiq?"

Pristiq contains the medicine desvenlafaxine. Do not take Pristiq with other medicines containing venlafaxine or desvenlafaxine.

Switching from other antidepressants

Side effects from discontinuing antidepressant medication have occurred when patients switched from other antidepressants, including venlafaxine, to Pristiq. Your doctor may gradually reduce the dose of your initial antidepressant medication to help reduce these side effects.

What should I avoid while taking Pristiq?

- Do not drive a car or operate machinery until you know how Pristiq affects you.
- Avoid drinking alcohol while taking Pristiq.

What are the possible side effects of Pristiq?

Pristiq can cause serious side effects, including:

- **See the beginning of this page.**
- **Serotonin syndrome or neuroleptic malignant syndrome (NMS)-like reactions. See "What should I tell my healthcare provider before taking Pristiq?"**

Get medical help right away if you think that you have these syndromes. Signs and symptoms of these syndromes may include one or more of the following:

- restlessness
- hallucinations (seeing and hearing things that are not real)
- coma
- nausea
- vomiting
- confusion
- increase in blood pressure
- diarrhea
- loss of coordination
- fast heart beat
- increased body temperature
- muscle stiffness

Pristiq may also cause other serious side effects including:

- **New or worsened high blood pressure (hypertension).** Your healthcare provider should monitor your blood pressure before and while you are taking Pristiq. If you have high blood pressure, it should be controlled before you start taking Pristiq.
- **Abnormal bleeding or bruising.** Pristiq and other SNRIs/SSRIs may cause you to have an increased chance of bleeding. Taking aspirin, NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs), or blood thinners may add to this risk. Tell your healthcare provider right away about any unusual bleeding or bruising.
- **Glaucoma (increased eye pressure)**
- **Increased cholesterol and triglyceride levels in your blood**
- **Symptoms when stopping Pristiq (discontinuation symptoms).** Side effects may occur when stopping Pristiq (discontinuation symptoms), especially when therapy is stopped suddenly. Your healthcare provider may want to decrease your dose slowly to help avoid side effects. Some of these side effects may include:
  - dizziness
  - abnormal dreams
  - nausea
  - tiredness
  - headache
  - irritability
  - diarrhea
  - sleeping problems (insomnia)
  - sweating
- **Seizures (convulsions)**
- **Low sodium levels in your blood.** Symptoms of this may include headache, difficulty concentrating, memory changes, confusion, weakness, and unsteadiness on your feet. In severe or more sudden cases, symptoms can include hallucinations (seeing or hearing things that are not real), fainting, seizures and coma. If not treated, severe low sodium levels could be fatal.
- **Allergic reactions.** Some reactions can be severe such as swelling beneath the skin (e.g., throat, face, hands). Contact your healthcare provider if you think you have any of these side effects.

Common side effects with Pristiq include:

- nausea
- diarrhea
- headache
- vomiting
- dry mouth
- loss of appetite
- sweating
- sleepiness
- tiredness
- insomnia
- decreased sex drive
- constipation
- delayed orgasm and ejaculation
- anxiety
- tremor
- dizziness
- dilated pupils

These are not all the possible side effects of Pristiq. Tell your healthcare provider about any side effect that bothers you or does not go away. Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. For more information on these and other side effects associated with Pristiq, talk to your healthcare provider, visit our web site at www.pristiq.com or call our toll-free number 1-888-Pristiq.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Contact Information

Please visit our web site at www.pristiq.com, or call our toll-free number 1-888-Pristiq to receive more information. This product's label may have been updated. For current package insert and further product information, please visit www.pfizer.com or call our medical communications department toll-free at 1-800-934-5556.

Uninsured? Need help paying for Pfizer medicines? Pfizer has programs that can help. Call **1-866-706-2400** or visit **www.PfizerHelpfulAnswers.com.**

PfizerHelpfulAnswers.com

@Work

An elderly patient paid me a wonderful compliment. "You're beautiful," she said. I must have looked skeptical because she was quick to assure me that she was sincere.

"It's just that I rarely hear flattering comments about my looks," I explained.

She smiled understandingly. "That's because you're fat. But it doesn't mean you aren't pretty." *Amy Motz,* Cincinnati, Ohio

But You Must Pay the Rent

No one likes coughing up rent. But at least these tenants gave landlords creative reasons for avoiding it.

■ "With my daughter's graduation, our new boat, and our trip to Europe this year, we're a little strapped."

■ "I'm getting *real* tired of paying this rent *every* month! You'll have to wait a few more days."

■ "We're a little short right now. But don't worry—we're getting a refund on my wife's tattoo. The artist messed it up, and we're getting back most of the bucks!"

■ "I didn't pay the rent because I'm saving up to move."

■ "It's your fault the check bounced. Why didn't you tell me you were going to run to the bank the very same day!" From the Landlord Protection Agency, thelpa.com

Here's a company that has low standards and doesn't mind owning up. Its help-wanted ad: "Seeking laborers, equipment operators, and dumb truck drivers."

Carolyn Cheatham, West Point, Virginia

The computer in my high school classroom was acting up. After watching

before

"Is nut job *hyphenated?"*

ILLUSTRATED BY JOE DI CHIARRO

Readers Digest.com

Don't Call Us, We'll Call You

When you're interviewing for a job, you want to make an impression. Hiring managers report that these people made one—just not the right kind:

- Applicant hugged hiring manager at the end of the interview.
- Applicant ate all the candy from the candy bowl while trying to answer questions.
- Applicant blew her nose and lined up the used tissues on the table in front of her.
- Applicant wore a hat that said "Take this job and shove it."
- Applicant talked about how an affair cost him a previous job.
- Applicant threw his beer can in the outside trash can before coming into the reception area.
- Applicant's friend came in and asked, "How much longer?"

From careerbuilder.com

me struggle with it, a student explained that my hard drive had crashed. So I called IT. "Can someone look at my computer?" I asked. "The hard drive crashed."

"We can't just send people down on your say-so," said the specialist. "How do you know that's the problem?"

"A student told me."

"We'll send someone right over."

Thomas Ellsworth, on gcfl.net

When our client's dog lapped up antifreeze, the veterinarian I work for ordered a unique treatment: an IV drip mixing fluids with vodka. "Go buy the cheapest bottle you can find," he told me.

At the liquor store, I was uneasy buying cheap booze so early in the day, and I felt compelled to explain things to the clerk. "Believe it or not," I said, "this is for a sick dog."

As I was leaving, the next customer plunked down two bottles of muscatel and announced, "These are for my cats."

Dorothy Schoener, Coudersport, Pennsylvania

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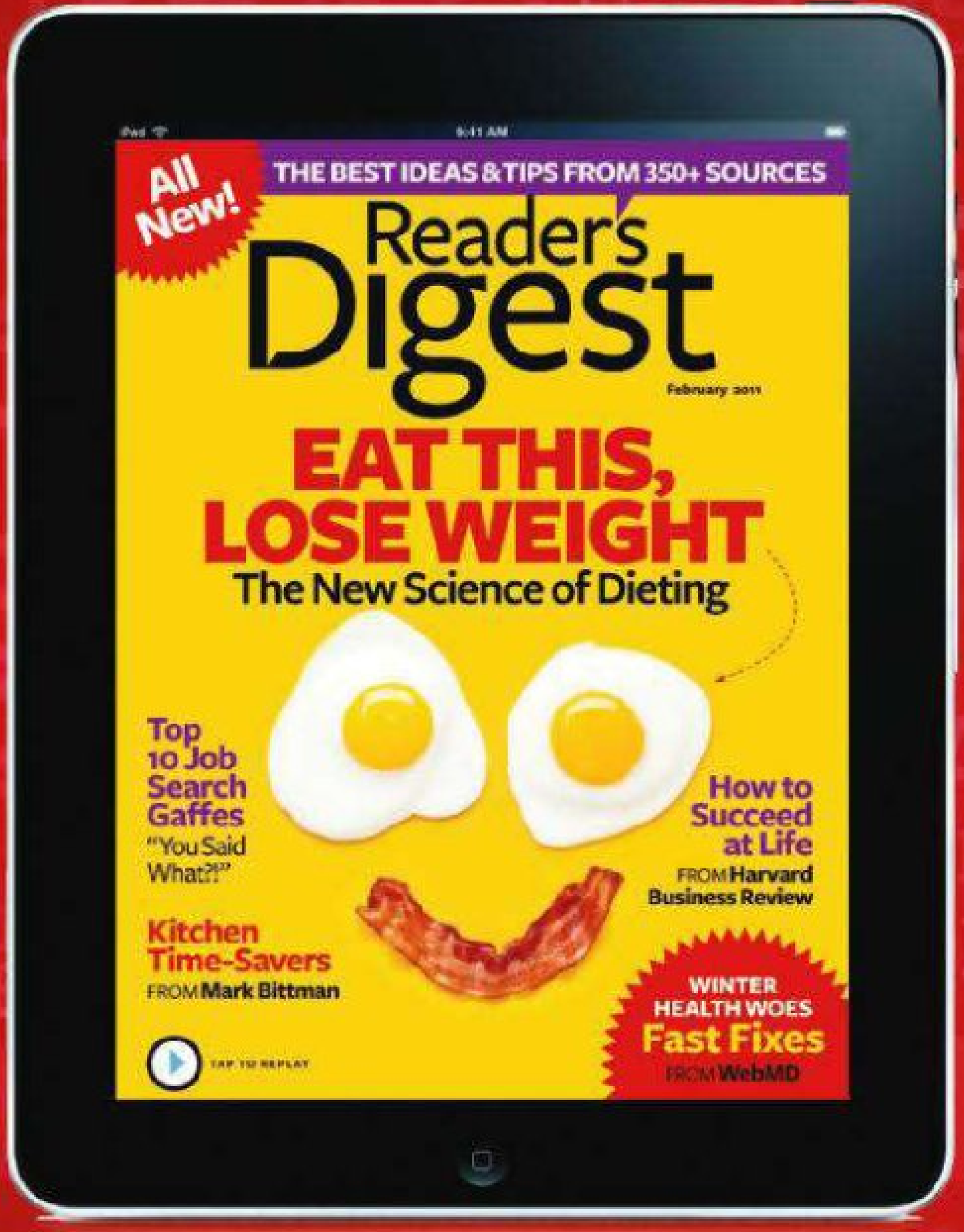

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Ask Laskas

JEANNE MARIE LASKAS

I love my husband dearly, *but he has one habit that drives me crazy. Whenever we're walking together and approach a door, he opens it and steps right in front of me to pass through first. But when we are with other women, he's always the gentleman, allowing them (and me) to walk ahead—which mystifies and insults me more! I've talked to him about it, and he promises to stop, but then he goes back to the same behavior. Short of tripping him as he blunders past me, what can I do?* *Lady and the Tramp*

Dear Lady,
Unless there's some passive-aggressive thing going on, which I doubt, this is just a matter of husband training. The next time you come to a door and he touches it, shout, "Stop!" The sound of your voice must be crisp and commanding, the tone you'd use on a dog sniffing a freshly cooked casserole. Continue loudly: "Now stand there until I walk through!" Repeat this for one month. Soon the husband will hear your voice every time he approaches a door, with you or without you. (He'll get it right eventually.) Be sure to say thank you as you pass through each open door.

One trend among *young girls is an expensive brand of doll. As a single working mother, I can't justify the expense, but my six-year-old keeps pestering me, saying, "Everybody has*

Jeanne Marie Laskas is not a shrink, but she does have uncommon sense.

ILLUSTRATED BY ISTVAN BANYAI

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Life's Little Etiquette Conundrums

My brother's wife offered to host a baby shower for me before I even had a chance to tell my friends I was pregnant. She did a wonderful job, sparing no expense. Now she's pregnant, and even though I'm on a tight budget, have an infant, live some distance away, and just started graduate school, she's hurt because I didn't offer to throw her a shower in return. My brother is equally upset, saying I should have offered as a matter of courtesy. Am I wrong?

Well, you're probably wrong for not wanting to throw her a baby shower (even if you can't, given your circumstances). She's probably wrong for expecting one (presumably she threw you a shower out of love and not as currency). And your brother is just plain foolish for getting in the middle. For the sake of the new cousins, however, you two should sit down and apologize to each other, agree that pregnancy and new motherhood is an incredibly stressful time, and make a pact to walk together through this exciting life stage.

Mommy Police are doing a number on your head. Let your daughter, as well as your friends, know the matter is closed, that your mind is made up. Smile confidently, then go play dolls with your girl.

I enjoy making quilt *wall hangings, and earlier this year, a friend asked me to make one for her. She specified color, theme, and dimensions, and we agreed on a price. When she received it, she phoned to tell me how beautiful it was and sent me a check. Six weeks later, she decided she didn't like it anymore and mailed it back. Unfortunately, the package never reached me. When she called asking about her refund, I was dumbfounded. She didn't send it by registered or certified mail; nor was it insured or able to be traced. I don't think she's entitled to a refund—even if it had reached me—because the quilt was made especially for her. But my now ex-friend thinks I'm lying and is angry because she has lost both the quilt and her money.* *Disappointed Artist*

Dear Disappointed,
Yeah, that friendship is a goner. If you have to explain the meaning of "art" to a friend, chances are she's never going to get it. In the future, tell people who order custom work that fees are nonrefundable and work is nonreturnable.

them." Normally, I'd resist, except other mothers claim I'm limiting her imagination. I think any other doll would be just as stimulating, but I can't bear the pressure from both my social circle and my daughter. What should I do? *Tired of the Whining*

Dear Tired,
You are "limiting her imagination" by refusing to go along with the mindless herd-think? Please! The

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Reader's Digest brings you simple ways to keep your heart healthy and strong. In this section, you'll find the heart-healthy information you need to live your life without missing a beat.

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LOW-CHOLESTEROL EGG WHITE FRITTATA

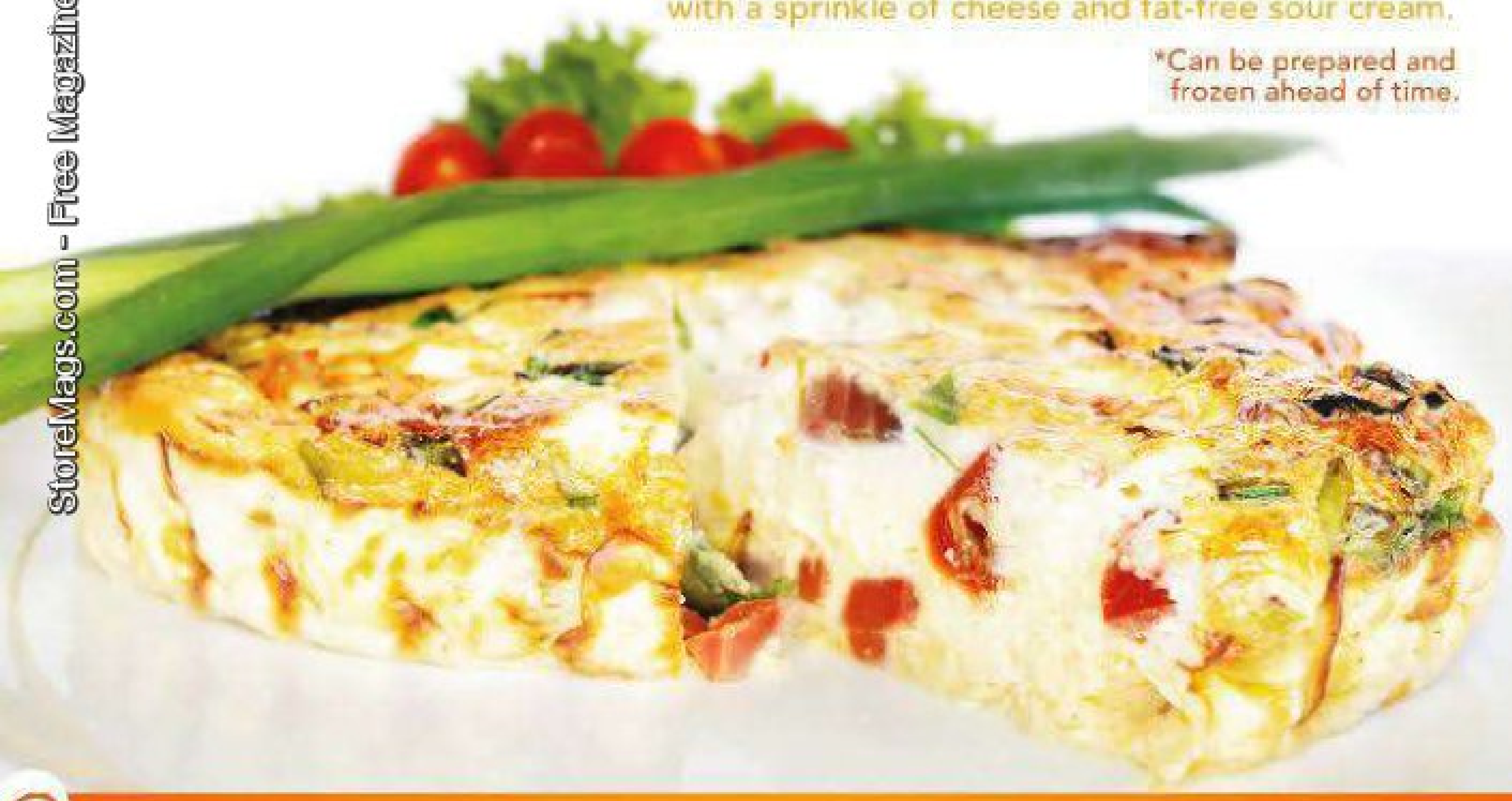
Ingredients

6 Eggland's Best egg whites, lightly beaten
1 c. diced peeled potato
½ c. diced onion
½ c. diced bell pepper
½ c. diced turkey bacon
½ c. shredded cheddar cheese
1 clove garlic, minced
2 tbsp olive oil

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
2. Boil potato in a saucepan for 10 minutes until tender; drain.
3. In a skillet, sauté onion, bell pepper, turkey bacon, and garlic in olive oil.
4. Combine 6 lightly beaten egg whites with ½ c. shredded cheddar cheese. Stir into meat and veggies, add potato and cook over medium-low heat for 5 minutes.
5. Place skillet in oven and bake for 5 minutes. Serve with a sprinkle of cheese and fat-free sour cream.

*Can be prepared and frozen ahead of time.



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Life's Funny That Way

A few weeks after the death of my father-in-law, I found my seven-year-old son crying in bed. His grandmother had died the previous year, and he was taking it all very hard.

"You know, Kyle," I said, "when we die, we'll get to see Grandma and Grandpa again in heaven."

With tears spilling down his face, Kyle cried, "That's easy for you to say. You don't have that long!"

Farrel Chapman, Dallas, Texas

"So a house salad for the lady, and for the gentleman, whatever has fallen on the floor."

Shortly before our 25th wedding anniversary, my husband sent 25 long-stemmed yellow roses to me at my office. A few days later, I plucked all the petals and dried them.

On the night of our anniversary, I spread the petals over the bed and lay on top of them, wearing only a negligee. As I'd hoped, I got a reaction from my husband.

When he saw me, he shouted, "Are those potato chips?"

Sue Ater, Goshen, Kentucky

When a squirrel slipped into my house, I did the logical thing: I panicked and called my father.

"How do you get a squirrel out of a basement?" I shrieked.

Dad advised me to leave a trail of peanut butter and crackers from the basement to the outside. It worked—the

At a baby shower, everyone was asked to complete nursery rhymes. My 11-year-old daughter Taylor contributed this: "Jack Sprat could eat no fat. His wife could eat no carbs."

David Ham, Sunrise, Florida

ILLUSTRATED BY GREGORY KOGAN

storeboard.com

squirrel ate his way out of the house. Unfortunately, he passed another squirrel eating his way in.

Corinne Stevens, Winnipeg, Canada

While visiting a retirement community, my wife and I decided to do some shopping and soon became separated.

"Excuse me," I said, approaching a clerk. "I'm looking for my wife. She has white hair and is wearing white shoes."

Gesturing around the store, the clerk responded, "Take your pick."

Albert Cutini, Murray, Kentucky

Tryst and Shout

Dating is complicated. You don't believe us? Here are some examples:

- Right after we broke up, my ex-girlfriend called to ask how to change her relationship status on Facebook.
- I got into a 90-minute argument with my girlfriend because she was adamant that *Moby Dick* was a true story. I finally let her win so I could go to sleep.
- My now ex-girlfriend and I were in my room one day, and the Internet was particularly slow. After I complained, she suggested that I untangle my Ethernet cord so that more Internet could get through.
- I recently joined an online dating site, and one of my matches was my first cousin.

From collegehumor.com

Your favorite new joke, funny anecdote, or crazy news story might be worth $$$. **See page 105 for details.**

Sports Nuts

Think baseball is dull and football isn't nasty enough? Try one of these extreme sports.

Wife carrying

Pumpkin racing

Rabbit hopping

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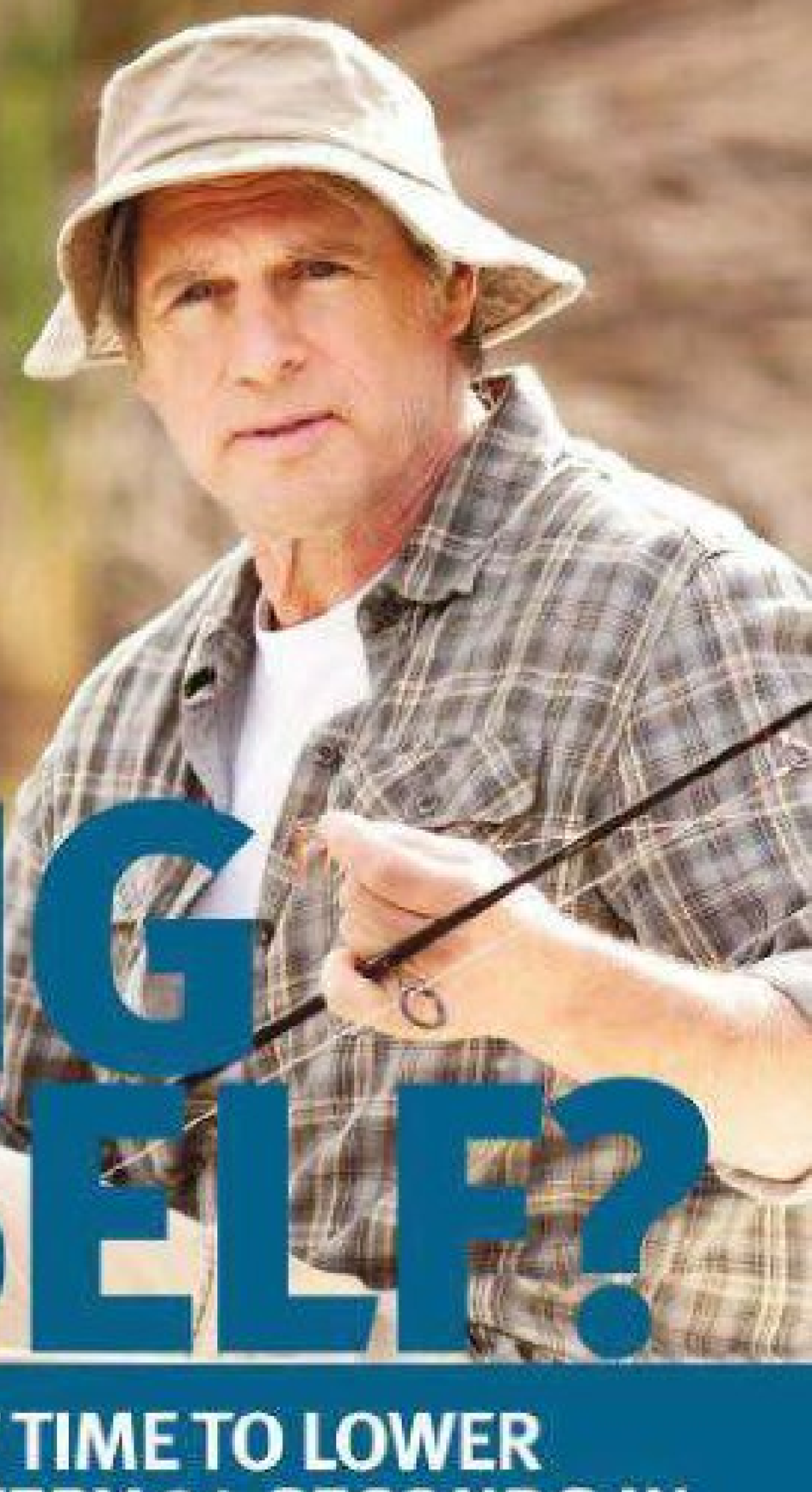
ARE YOU KIDDING YOURSELF?



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INDICATION:
LIPITOR is a prescription medicine that is used along with a low-fat diet. It lowers the LDL ("bad" cholesterol) and triglycerides in your blood. It can raise your HDL ("good" cholesterol) as well. LIPITOR can lower the risk for heart attack, stroke, certain types of heart surgery, and chest pain in patients who have heart disease or risk factors for heart disease such as age, smoking, high blood pressure, low HDL, or family history of early heart disease.

LIPITOR can lower the risk for heart attack or stroke in patients with diabetes and risk factors such as diabetic eye or kidney problems, smoking or high blood pressure.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA.

Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

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If you've been waiting to lower your high cholesterol, stop kidding yourself. High cholesterol is a significant risk factor for heart attacks.

When healthy diet and exercise are not enough, adding Lipitor may help. Along with diet:

- Lipitor has been shown to lower bad cholesterol 39% to 60% (average effect depending on dose).
- Lipitor is FDA-approved to reduce the risk of heart attack and stroke in patients who have heart disease or risk factors for heart disease. These risk factors include smoking, age, family history of early heart disease, high blood pressure and low good cholesterol.

Lipitor is backed by over 18 years of research.

Talk to your doctor about your risk and about Lipitor. Learn more at lipitor.com or call 1-888-LIPITOR (1-888-547-4867).

IMPORTANT SAFETY INFORMATION:
LIPITOR is not for everyone. It is not for those with liver problems. And it is not for women who are nursing, pregnant or may become pregnant.

If you take LIPITOR, tell your doctor if you feel any new muscle pain or weakness. This could be a sign of rare but serious muscle side effects. Tell your doctor about all medications you take. This may help avoid serious drug interactions. Your doctor should do blood tests to check your liver function before and during treatment and may adjust your dose.

Common side effects are diarrhea, upset stomach, muscle and joint pain and changes in some blood tests.

Please see additional important information on next pages.

LIPITOR®
atorvastatin calcium
tablets

DON'T KID YOURSELF

Find out more at lipitor.com

IMPORTANT FACTS

LIPITOR atorvastatin calcium (LIP-ih-tore)

LOWERING YOUR HIGH CHOLESTEROL

High cholesterol is more than just a number, it's a risk factor that should not be ignored. If your doctor said you have high cholesterol, you may be at an increased risk for heart attack and stroke. But the good news is, you can take steps to lower your cholesterol.

With the help of your doctor and a cholesterol-lowering medicine like LIPITOR, along with diet and exercise, you could be on your way to lowering your cholesterol.

Ready to start eating right and exercising more? Talk to your doctor and visit the American Heart Association at www.americanheart.org.

WHO IS LIPITOR FOR?

Who can take LIPITOR:

- People who cannot lower their cholesterol enough with diet and exercise
- Adults and children over 10

Who should NOT take LIPITOR:

- Women who are pregnant, may be pregnant, or may become pregnant. LIPITOR may harm your unborn baby. If you become pregnant, stop LIPITOR and call your doctor right away.
- Women who are breast-feeding. LIPITOR can pass into your breast milk and may harm your baby.
- People with liver problems
- People allergic to anything in LIPITOR

BEFORE YOU START LIPITOR

Tell your doctor:

- About all medications you take, including prescriptions, over-the-counter medications, vitamins, and herbal supplements
- If you have muscle aches or weakness
- If you drink more than 2 alcoholic drinks a day
- If you have diabetes or kidney problems
- If you have a thyroid problem

ABOUT LIPITOR

LIPITOR is a prescription medicine. Along with diet and exercise, it lowers "bad" cholesterol in your blood. It can also raise "good" cholesterol (HDL-C).

LIPITOR can lower the risk of heart attack, stroke, certain types of heart surgery, and chest pain in patients who have heart disease or risk factors for heart disease such as:

- age, smoking, high blood pressure, low HDL-C, family history of early heart disease

LIPITOR can lower the risk of heart attack or stroke in patients with diabetes and risk factors such as diabetic eye or kidney problems, smoking, or high blood pressure.

POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF LIPITOR

Serious side effects in a small number of people:

- **Muscle problems** that can lead to kidney problems, including kidney failure. Your chance for muscle problems is higher if you take certain other medicines with LIPITOR.
- **Liver problems**. Your doctor may do blood tests to check your liver before you start LIPITOR and while you are taking it.

Call your doctor right away if you have:

- Unexplained muscle weakness or pain, especially if you have a fever or feel very tired
- Allergic reactions including swelling of the face, lips, tongue, and/or throat that may cause difficulty in breathing or swallowing which may require treatment right away
- Nausea, vomiting, or stomach pain
- Feeling more tired than usual
- Allergic skin reactions
- Brown or dark-colored urine
- Your skin and the whites of your eyes turn yellow

Common side effects of LIPITOR are:

- Diarrhea
- Muscle and joint pain
- Upset stomach
- Changes in some blood tests

HOW TO TAKE LIPITOR

Do:

- Take LIPITOR as prescribed by your doctor.
- Try to eat heart-healthy foods while you take LIPITOR.
- Take LIPITOR at any time of day, with or without food.
- If you miss a dose, take it as soon as you remember. But if it has been more than 12 hours since your missed dose, wait. Take the next dose at your regular time.

Don't:

- Do not change or stop your dose before talking to your doctor.
- Do not start new medicines before talking to your doctor.
- Do not give your LIPITOR to other people. It may harm them even if your problems are the same.
- Do not break the tablet.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

- Ask your doctor or health care provider.
- Talk to your pharmacist.
- Go to **www.lipitor.com** or call **1-888-LIPITOR**.

Uninsured? Need help paying for Pfizer medicines? Pfizer has programs that can help. Call **1-866-706-2400** or visit **www.PfizerHelpfulAnswers.com.**

Pfizer helpful answers®

Rx only

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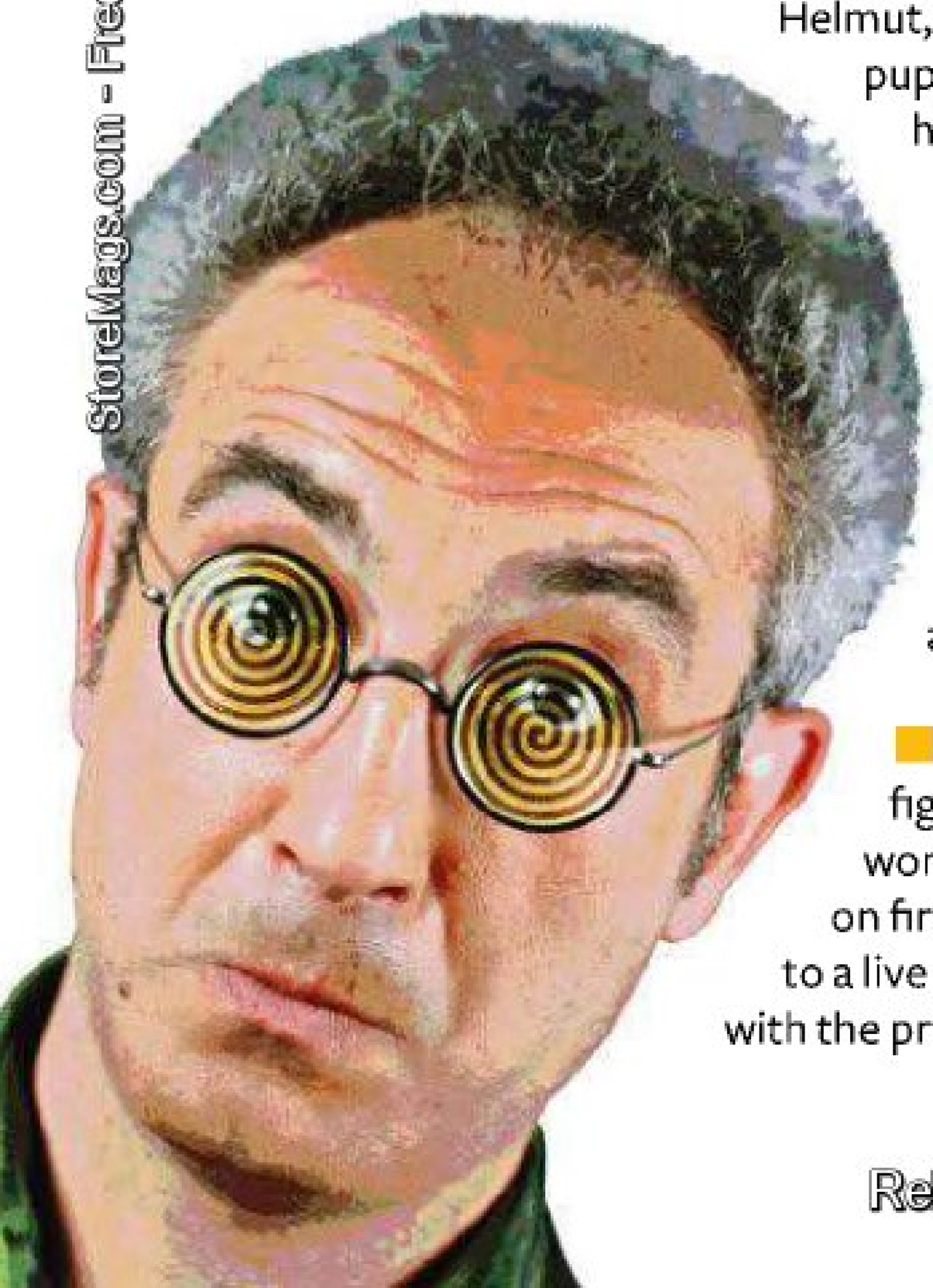
Dumb

Nothing bucks up our spirits more dumber than we are. Except maybe

✓ *Dumb* ON THE JOB

Presenting ... The Great Narcissus! Joanna Kirchmeier arrived at her London home only to find her husband, Helmut, in front of a mirror "just staring at himself, his pupils tiny." Helmut, a newly trained hypnotist, had accidentally hypnotized himself while rehearsing a new act and had been standing like that for five hours. Source: *London Telegraph*



No Shirt/No Hands/No Service A Florida bank refused to let a man born without arms cash his wife's check, even though he provided two forms of identification. The reason given: He couldn't provide a thumbprint. Source: (Cleveland) *Plain Dealer*

The Hottest Show on Cable Zurich firefighters were called to the home of an elderly woman who reported that her television set was on fire. When they arrived, they found her TV tuned to a live feed of a fireplace. "The fire was extinguished with the press of a button," said a police spokesperson.

Source: Associated Press

RYAN MCVAY/GETTY IMAGES

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fiordkaos.com

ocracy

than knowing there are people knowing there are lots of them.

■ **Scalpel ... Forceps ... Pink Slip ...** When a Madison, Wisconsin, hospital decided to lay off 90 employees, executives there wanted to get it over with quickly. But the timing for one nurse wasn't ideal. She was dismissed during surgery.

Source: allheadlinenews.com

✓ *Dumb* DIETS

■ **Sleeping Beauty Diet**
If you aren't awake, you can't eat, right? Advocates sedate themselves and sleep for days.

■ **The Tapeworm Diet**
Take one orally, or, according to tapewormdiet.net, "travel to a part of the world where beef tapeworms are endemic" and infect yourself that way.

■ **The Cotton Ball Diet** Begin each meal with an appetizer of cotton balls. The balls will fill you up so that you won't want to eat as much.

■ **The Baby Food Diet** Babies weigh next to nothing, so it

ILLUSTRATED BY CHRISTOPH NIEMANN

Vote the Idiots In!

There are a lot of stories here that will make you question the trajectory of human intelligence. Go to **readersdigest.com/dummies** and vote for the wackiest of the wackos. We'll print the winners (or is it losers?) in our September humor issue—including the one you crown the Dumbest Person in the World!

Wha??

Dumb Holiday Cards (from our readers):

- My father-in-law sent me a card addressed: "To a Sweet Grand-daughter ..."

Patty P., Havertown, Pennsylvania

- I received a Happy Hanukkah card ... for Christmas.

Doug L., Royalton, Minnesota

- I once got a hand-drawn card with a message of hellfire and damnation, followed by the words *Merry Christmas.* *Judy O.*, Elmhurst, New York

- Someone sent me a Halloween card with a photo of my mother's grave attached. *Sheila H.*, Grand Junction, Colorado

makes sense to duplicate their diet, right? In this case, replace your meals with puréed peas, fruit, carrots, chicken, whatever. Just make sure it comes in those little jars.

■ **Fletcherizing** Horace "The Great Masticator" Fletcher preached chewing each mouthful exactly 32 times until the food was "purified" and then spitting out what remained. This way, you get the nutrients with fewer calories.

Sources: listverse.com, dietsinreview.com, everydayhealth.com

✓ *Dumb* IN GOVERNMENT

■ **If You Disagree, Hiss** The city of Wheeling, Illinois, plans to build a $1.2 million paved bike-and-pedestrian path. People who use the path will most likely spend much of their time jogging, as it happens to run adjacent to the habitat of the highly poisonous Eastern massasauga rattlesnake. Source: *St. Louis Today*

■ **Fuzzy Wuzzy Wuzn't Marxist, Wuz He?** The Texas Board of Education banned the book *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?* because the author, Bill Martin Jr., has the same name as a Marxist theorist. No one bothered to check whether they were indeed one and the same person. Source: *Huffington Post*

■ **Let's Just Call It Lake C** The Webster, Massachusetts, Chamber of Commerce has discovered that the name of the town lake has been misspelled on signs for years. The lake they incorrectly spelled *Chargoggagoggmanchaoggagoggchaubunaguhgamaugg* is actually spelled *Chargoggagoggmanchauggagoggchaubunagungamaugg*.

Source: *Worcester* (Massachusetts) *Telegram & Gazette*

ICHIRO/GETTY IMAGES

■ **Vice Minister** Russia's finance minister, Alexei Kudrin, knows a way to generate taxes and goose his country's sluggish economy: Everyone

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Floral Edge.com

should drink and smoke more. "If you smoke a pack of cigarettes, that means you are giving more to help solve social problems," he said.

Source: CBS News

✓ *Dumb* HUSBANDS & SUITORS

No Way to Gitmo Action A Saudi woman filed for divorce from her husband of 17 years after peeking through the contacts in his cell phone. Next to her phone number, she found the nickname Guantanamo.

Source: *London Telegraph*

A Whole Lot of Love Last July, Richard Barton Jr., of Grand Rapids, Michigan, got married and posted the photos on Facebook. One of the people viewing the pictures was Barton's first wife, who decided to call the cops. Why? She says she was still his wife because they were separated but never divorced. Barton, who claims he signed divorce papers, was arrested on charges of polygamy.

Source: mlive.com

But She Has a Great Personality President Ian Khama of Botswana is looking for a wife, but only slim, beautiful women need apply. Pointing to a heavyset government official, Khama said, "I don't want one like her. She may fail to pass through the door, break furniture with her heavy weight, and even break the vehicle's shock absorber."

Source: ABC News

✓ *Dumb* LAWSUITS

And Here's the Kicker On her way home from having dinner and drinks, Melanie Shaker of Chicago got angry with her husband and tried to kick him. Instead, she crashed through the window of a beauty salon, suffering several deep cuts. So naturally she sued the salon. Part of her argument: The store's plate glass window, which fronts a sidewalk "frequently traveled by intoxicated pedestrians," should have been stronger.

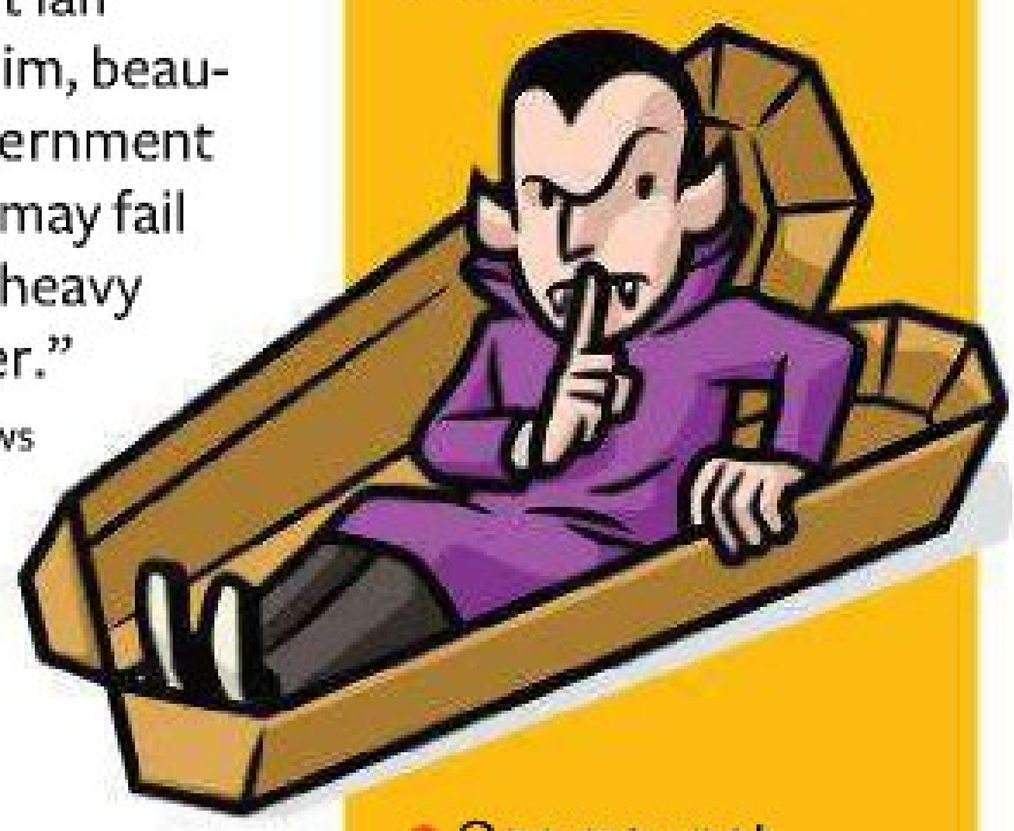
Source: wbbm780.com (Chicago)

And to Prove the Point ... An Australian man was ordered to pony up $500 in court costs after he lost his lawsuit against his ex-wife. He'd taken her to court hoping the judge

Uhh ...

Dumb Laws

- No one may catch a fish with his bare hands. (Indiana)
- No one may throw snowballs in a public place. (Warsaw, Indiana)
- Spectators at a boxing match may not mock one of the contestants. (Louisiana)
- No one may scream in a haunted house. (Topeka, Kansas)



- One may not honk another's horn. (University City, Missouri)
- A person may be placed in jail for making fun of someone who refuses a duel. (West Virginia)

Source: Law Summary at dumblaws.com

would order her to remove this bumper sticker from her car: "Men are idiots. I divorced the king!" Source: news.com.au

Numbers Gamed A Fort Lee, New Jersey, woman is suing WABC-TV in New York for broadcasting the wrong winning lottery numbers. Rakel Daniele experienced the thrill of victory when the station called out her numbers, only to feel the agony of defeat days later when she learned the TV station was mistaken. Broadcasting the wrong numbers, she claimed in her suit, went "beyond all possible bounds of decency" and was "utterly intolerable in a civilized community."

Source: northjersey.com

Victory Is Not in the Bag After arresting Craig Clark Show on charges of drunken driving, Idaho state troopers opened a medicine bag he had with him. Show considered suing the state police and county sheriff's office, claiming that a medicine woman had blessed the bag, and by opening it, cops destroyed its mystical powers—but in the end, he thought better of it. Source: *Bonner County* (Idaho) *Daily Bee*

Hold the Cactus! A Miami diner ordered the grilled artichoke special from the restaurant's menu and ended up in the hospital with stomach pains. He's now suing the restaurant, Houston's, for not warning him that he shouldn't eat the artichoke's tough, pointy leaves. Source: foodanddrinkdigital.com

✓ *Dumb* VICTIMS

Cruisin' and Losin' An iPod was stolen from a convertible outside a Walmart. The owner, said police, locked the doors, rolled up the windows, and turned on the alarm ... but left the top down.

Source: *Shelbyville* (Tennessee) *Times-Gazette*; submitted by Barbara Landis

Putting the "Dip" in Diplomat Three men in Kansas City, Missouri, were convicted of selling phony diplomatic cards, which, they told their victims, granted them "Ambassador" status. For $450 to $2,000, the bearers of the card were told, they would be exempt from paying U.S. taxes as well as all traffic and parking fines. Source: state.gov

Duh

Dumb Warning Labels

- On a baby stroller: "Remove child before folding."
- On a brass fishing lure with a three-pronged hook on the end: "Harmful if swallowed."
- On a cartridge for a laser printer: "Do not eat toner."
- On a carpenter's electric drill: "This product not intended for use as a dental drill."

- On a thermometer: "Once used rectally, the thermometer should not be used orally."
- On a dishwasher: "Do not allow children to play in the dishwasher."

Source: Michigan Lawsuit Abuse Watch

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FloridaMags.com

Alt+Ctrl+Stpd The owner of a Mount Kisco, New York, computer shop convinced a customer that his computer virus was part of an evil plot by Polish priests linked to the religious organization Opus Dei, authorities say. The priests were a threat to not only the man's family, he insisted, but also to the entire United States. The best safeguard: regular credit card charges amounting to some $6 million over six years paid to the owner—who insisted he was working with the CIA—to ensure protection from the priests. (The owner has pleaded not guilty.)

Source: nytimes.com

✓ *Dumb* CRIMINALS, PART 1

Dude, Where's My Getaway Car? An Aiken, South Carolina, man robbed a clerk at a convenience store, then jumped into his getaway vehicle and took off. Police had little trouble catching up with him a short distance away. He was driving a Craftsman riding lawn mower. Source: aikenstandard.com

Third Time's a Bust The PNC Bank in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, was allegedly robbed twice by the same man. The suspect was finally nabbed when he returned a third time to check his account balance.

Source: (Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania) *Patriot-News*

Anyone Got Change for an $80 Bill? Found in Phoenix: The greediest bank robber ever! During a stickup, he told the teller to hand over "all the twenties, forties, and sixties." Source: times-herald.com

Pickup or Delivery? A Connecticut bank received a strange phone call. It was from a pair of would-be robbers requesting that the bank prepare a bag of money for them to pick up a few minutes later. When they arrived, the men found the police waiting instead.

Source: Associated Press

D'oh!

Dumb Places to Flirt

Looking for a mate? The folks at thefrisky.com suggest you avoid these less-than-hot spots:

- A hospital waiting room
- The gym
- A funeral
- A job interview
- The underwear section of a department store
- In line for the bathroom
- Your therapy appointment
- A parent-teacher conference
- On a date with someone else
- At work

StoreMaga.com

Huh??

Dumb Book Titles

- *Collectible Spoons of the Third Reich*
- *An Intellectual History of Cannibalism*
- *Father Christmas Needs a Wee*
- *The Changing World of Inflammatory Bowel Disease*
- *Afterthoughts of a Worm Hunter*

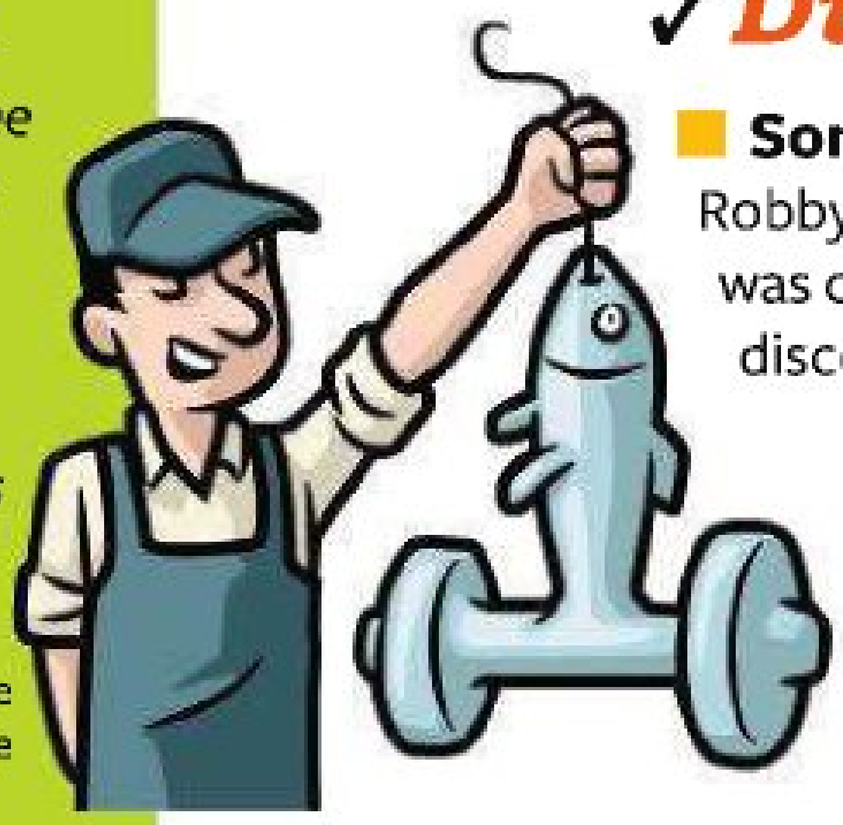
Source: The Diagram Prize

Dumb Lyrics

- "You can forget about Christmas, cause you ain't gon even see New Year's."
  Master P, "Do You Know"
- "Never let me slip, 'cause if I slip, then I'm slippin'."
  Dr. Dre, "Nuthin' but a 'G' Thang"
- "Sometimes we swim around, like two dolphins in the oceans of our hearts."
  LFO, "Every Other Time"
- "I say what's next, what's next what's N-X-E-T."
  Warren G, "What's Next"

■ **The Back-to-Jail Special** Two men were arrested for shoplifting at a back-to-school event at an office supply store. Their careful planning was thwarted by one small detail: It was the annual "Shop with a Cop" day, when about 60 police officers show up to help children pick out school supplies. Source: oregonlive.com

✓ *Dumb* IN SPORTS



■ **Something's Fishy Here** Robby Rose lost his first-place medal and was charged with a felony after it was discovered that he'd cheated in a Texas fishing tournament by stuffing a one-pound weight down the throat of a bass he'd caught. Officials became suspicious when they placed Rose's fish in a tank and it sank to the bottom. Source: *Dallas Morning News*

■ **Wrong Team** In honor of Remembrance Day—when British Commonwealth countries honor their fallen veterans—the Scottish soccer team Airdrie United found the perfect photograph for its program cover: World War II–era nurses handing water to grinning Allied troops. Accompanying it were the words *Lest we forget* and *Supporting our heroes*. It was very moving, even though it was actually a photo of World War II–era German nurses handing water to grinning Nazi soldiers. Source: news.com.au

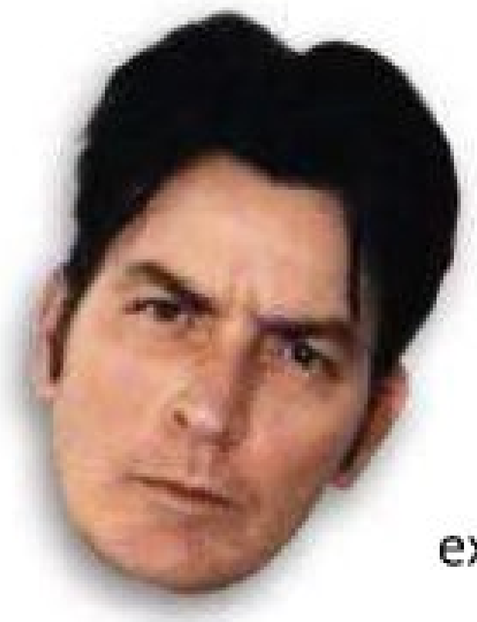
■ **Pitching a Fit** While walking down steps at Denver's Coors Field last July, San Diego Padres pitcher Mat Latos was injured and subsequently placed on the 15-day disabled list. He hurt himself trying to stifle a sneeze. Source: msn.foxsports.com

✓ *Dumb* CELEBRITIES

■ "That's why I don't eat friggin' lobster. Because they're alive when you kill it."
Snookie, from *Jersey Shore*

■ "I just use Listerine. Sometimes I'll use my sweater."
Jessica Simpson, on not brushing her teeth

storeking.com



■ "I am on a drug—it's called Charlie Sheen. It's not available because if you try it, you will die. Your face will melt off, and your children will weep over your exploded body."

■ "Right now, I'm trying to just finish my record and get through the last season of *Gossip Girl*. So not so much thinking about that."

Actress Taylor Momsen, when asked what she was doing to help Haiti after the devastating earthquake

■ "I know for a fact it's not in my destiny to die listening to a Britney Spears album, so I always put that on in my [headphones] when I'm flying."

Actress Megan Fox

✓ *Dumb* CRIMINALS, PART 2

■ **In Dios We Trust** Two counterfeiters were arrested with fake $100 bills. The clue that gave them away: the Spanish words *Billete De La Suerte Alasitas*—or roughly translated "Lucky Money"—printed on the front.

Source: guyism.com

■ **This Is Your Brain on Drugs** A 21-year-old man called the police after suspecting he'd just been ripped off. The marijuana he had purchased from a street dealer, he told cops, tasted "nasty," and he wanted them to confirm that the weed was real. Luckily for him, it wasn't.

Source: *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette*

■ **Make Yourself at Home** After a man kicked in the front door of a Texas home at 3:30 a.m., the resident fled and called police. When cops arrived, they were surprised to find that the intruder hadn't stolen a thing. Even more surprising: They found him in the bathroom, enjoying a warm bath.

Source: Associated Press

FROM TOP: PITKIN COUNTY JAIL/RETNA LTD./CORBIS; VINCENT BESNAULT/GETTY IMAGES

Umm ...

Dumb Words
These ubiquitous words and phrases have seen their day, say contributors to the Lake Superior State University 2011 List of Banished Words.

- *the American people*: "Aren't all Americans people?"
- *backstory*: "A perfectly good word already exists—*history*."
- *BFF*: "These chicks call each other BFF (best friends forever), and it lasts about ten minutes. BFFA (best friends for a while) makes more sense."
- *epic*: "Standards for using *epic* are so low, even *awesome* is embarrassed."
- *man up*: "A stupid phrase when directed at men. Even more stupid when directed at women."
- *viral*: "This linguistic disease of a term must be quarantined."

Sierra Sage.com

LOLWS*

Dumb Fan Tweets to Celebrities

- **@margaretatwood** handmaids tale sucks and I'm gonna fail my A level exam because of it, thanks ... not!!
- **@Dolly_Parton** call mi wen u have time 18764513XXX
- **@IAMQUEEN LATIFAH** Can you help with my math, Psychology, I'm trying to get my GED
- **@kanyewest** do you like fishsticks?

Source: twitter.com

Dumb Celebrities, Kids' Names Edition

- Audio Science (Mother: Actress Shannyn Sossamon)
- Elijah Bob Patricius Guggi Q (Father: Bono)
- Speck Wildhorse (Father: John Mellencamp)
- Pilot Inspektor (Father: Jason Lee)
- Kal-El [Superman's real name] (Father: Nicolas Cage)

**laughing out loud while snorting*

■ **Beware of Human** As a burglar tried to enter the home of a Georgia woman, she took matters into her own hands. Getting on all fours, she barked and scratched feverishly at the door. The thief was last seen running from the porch.

Source: *Athens* (Georgia) *Banner-Herald*

✓ *Dumb* ON SOCIAL MEDIA

■ Mom: Did you text Camille about needing to talk to her about you know what?
Me: I am Camille ...
Mom: Oh ...

■ Dad: Why can't I find sebisquet on Netflicks?

■ Friend 1: Where are you? I'm at your house.
Friend 2: I'm outside picking my herpes.
Friend 1: Should I leave you alone?
Friend 2: Ackkkk! HERBS! Picking my herbs for dinner!

■ Joseph: "I whip my hair back and fourth, I whip my hair back and fourth ..."
James: "As opposed to back and fifth?"

Sources: whenparentstext.com, damnyouautocorrect.com, lamebook.com

✓ *Dumb* CREATURE

Animal Haute Couture Hats are back in style, and fashionable mammals, like this bear, won't be seen in public without something covering their heads.

PAUL A. SOUDERS/CORBIS

storeKeep.com

✓ *Dumb Ideas,* SMART RESULTS

And now, to leave you on a high note: proof that even the most laughable ideas—such as these business ventures—can work out.

Nuts About Neuticles Are dogs really so concerned about their postneutered looks that they're too ashamed to show their faces (or the other end) at the dog run? Gregg Miller, of Oak Grove, Missouri, thinks so. He's the inventor of Neuticles—fake testicles for your best friend. A quarter million owners have dropped more than $100 on a pair for their pets, not including the cost of surgery.

Second Life Real Estate Mogul You know that the online fantasy game Second Life is exactly that—fantasy, right? Luckily for Ailin Graef, of Wuhan, China, not everyone is clear on the concept. Graef, a newly minted millionaire, is the Donald Trump of Second Life. A few years ago, she started buying up virtual land—land that exists only in cyberspace, not the real world—from the game's producers. She then subdivided the "property" and resold the lots to other gamers (insisting on real money, not the virtual kind) at a high markup. She even charged a property tax. Nice.

Dots Amazing Alex Tew, of Wiltshire, England, wanted a million dollars quickly and without working too hard. So he created the Million Dollar Homepage and charged advertisers $1 a pixel. What was on the site other than tiny ads the size of a ten-by-ten pixel block or more? Absolutely nothing. But that didn't stop him from raking in a million dollars within five months.

High-Tech Panhandling Karyn Bosnak, of New York City, likes the finer things in life, which is how she racked up a $20,000 credit card bill right before losing her job. What to do? Beg. She started the website savekaryn.com and beseeched strangers to send her whatever they could afford. Twenty weeks later, she'd raised $13,000.

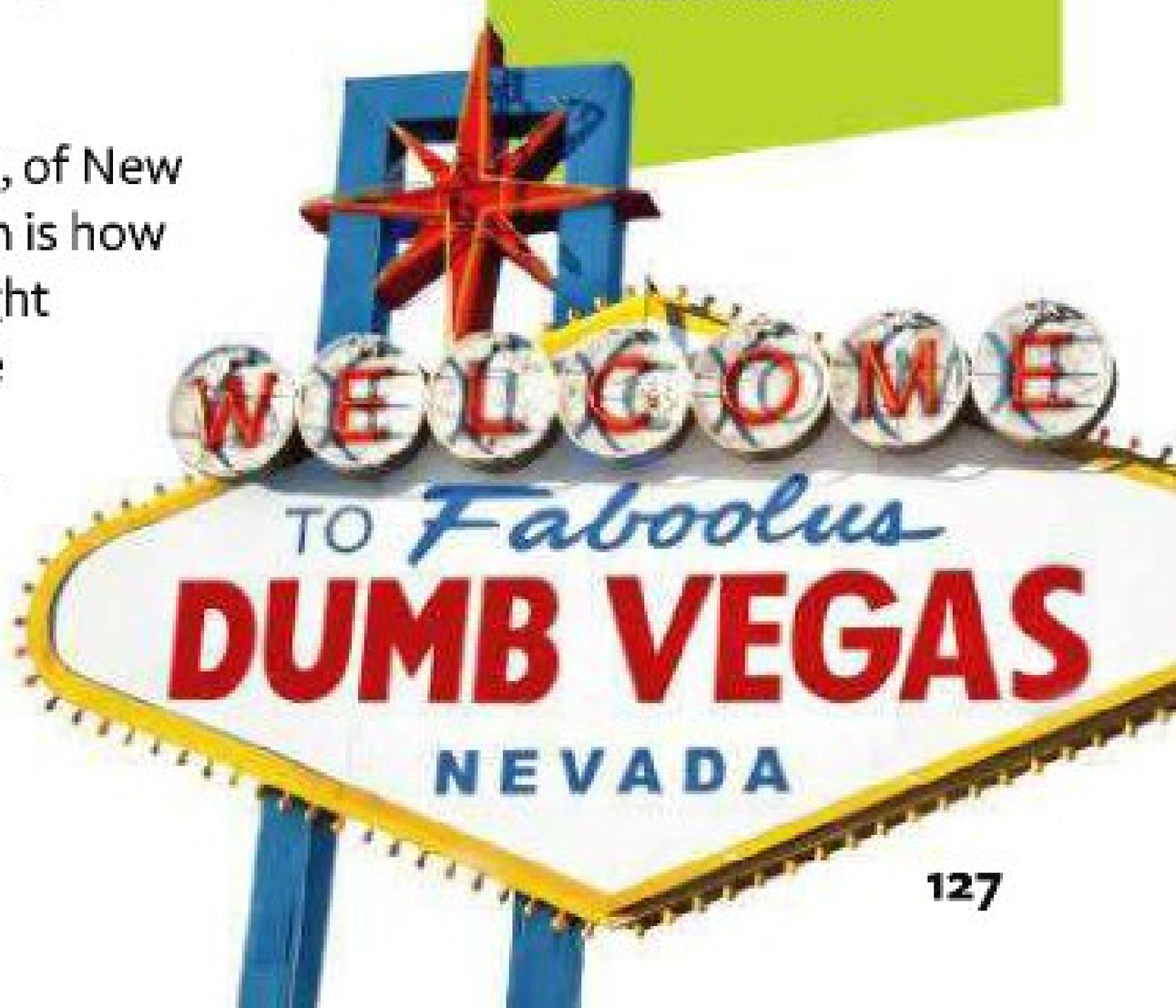
Source: tru.com, gunaxin.com

Where?

Dumb Cities
To all insulted cities: Don't blame us. Blame folks at the *Daily Beast*—they compiled this list. Their criteria: the number of residents in the metropolitan area over 25 with bachelor's degrees and graduate degrees, as well as nonfiction book sales, higher education institutions, and libraries per capita.

Dumb Burgs
1. Las Vegas, Nevada
2. San Antonio, Texas
3. Fresno, California
4. Houston, Texas

And the smartest city: Boston, Massachusetts.



NEWCASTLE PHOTOGRAPHY/GETTY IMAGES

THE CITY THAT CYBER CRIME BUILT

How a remote town in Romania became the epicenter of digital scams

BY YUDHIJIT BHATTACHARJEE

FROM *Wired*

Three hours outside Bucharest, Romanian National Road 7 begins a gentle ascent into the foothills of the Transylvanian Alps. Meadowland gives way to crumbling houses with chickens in the front yard, laundry flapping on clotheslines. But you know you've arrived in the city of Râmnicu Vâlcea when you see the Mercedes-Benz dealership. It sits in the middle of a grassy field, shiny sedans on display behind glass walls. And right next door is another luxury car dealer, this one selling various other high-end European rides. It's

ILLUSTRATED BY JEFFREY SMITH

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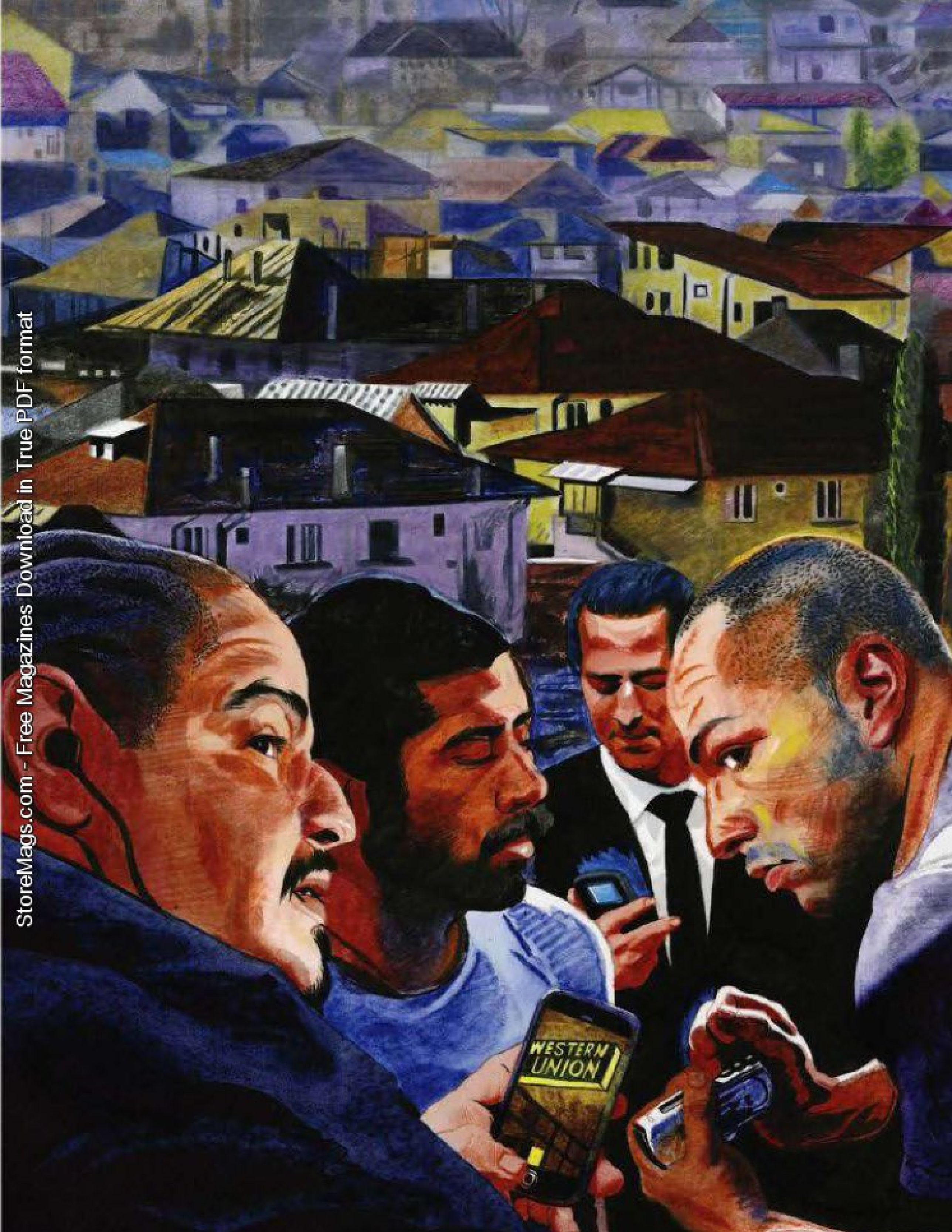

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as if the sheer magic of wealth shimmered these glass-and-steel buildings into existence.

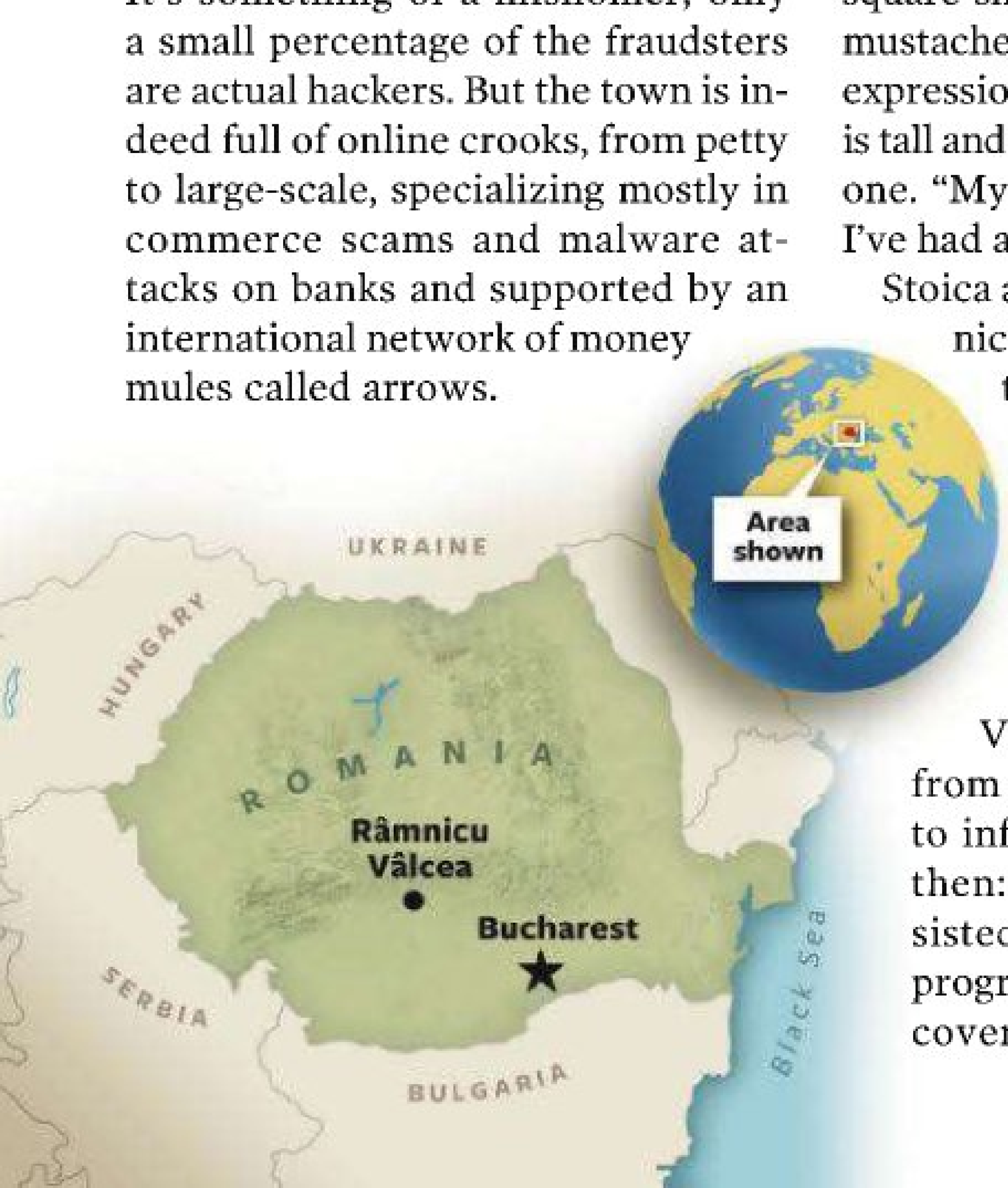
In fact, expensive cars choke the streets of Râmnicu Vâlcea's bustling town center—top-of-the-line BMWs, Audis, and Mercedeses driven by twenty- and thirtysomething men sporting gold chains, fidgeting at red lights. I ask my cabdriver if these men all have high-paying jobs, and he laughs. He puts his hands in the air, palms down, and wiggles his fingers as if typing on an imaginary keyboard. "They steal money on the Internet," he says.

Among law-enforcement officials around the world, Râmnicu Vâlcea has a nickname: Hackerville. It's something of a misnomer; only a small percentage of the fraudsters are actual hackers. But the town is indeed full of online crooks, from petty to large-scale, specializing mostly in commerce scams and malware attacks on banks and supported by an international network of money mules called arrows.

According to ballpark estimates from law-enforcement sources, these schemes have brought tens of millions of dollars into Râmnicu Vâlcea over the past decade, fueling the development of new apartments, nightclubs, and shopping centers. Râmnicu Vâlcea is a city whose main export is cybercrime, and business is booming.

I meet **Bogdan Stoica** and Alexandru Frunza, two of just four local cops on the digital beat, at an Italian restaurant in a neighborhood dotted with gated bungalows and apartment buildings. Stoica, 32, is square-shouldered and stocky, with a mustache and prominent stubble. His expression rarely changes. Frunza, 29, is tall and clean shaven. He's the funny one. "My English will improve after I've had a few beers," he says.

Stoica and Frunza grew up in Râmnicu Vâlcea. "The only cars on the streets were those made by Dacia," Stoica says, referring to the venerable Romanian carmaker. "Guys from the Communist Party were allowed to own imported cars like Volvos and Volgas, bought from the Soviet Union." Access to information was limited back then: Weekday television consisted of two hours of state-run programming, mostly devoted to covering the dictator, Nicoleau



ILLUSTRATED BY 5W INFOGRAPHIC

Ceausescu. "We had half an hour of cartoons on Sunday," Stoica says.

In 1989, a revolution that began with anticommunist riots ended with the execution of Ceausescu and his wife, and the country switched to a free market economy. By 1998, when Stoica finished high school and went off to the police academy in Bucharest, another revolution was well under way: the Internet. The economy wasn't under state control anymore, but the country was still poor. Râmnicu Vâlcea was better off than many Romanian towns, thanks to a decades-old chemical manufacturing company headquartered there and a modest tourism industry based on the surrounding mountains, historic churches, and a 17th-century monastery. But life was still tough for most of the city's residents, and many young men and women struggled to find work.

As buying and selling on the Internet took off, online scamming emerged as a new way to steal money. Râmnicu Vâlcea produced some of the pioneers in the business. Cybercafés enabled cheap, anonymous access to the Internet, and crooks in Râmnicu Vâlcea got busy, posting fake ads—on sites like Craigslist, AutoTrader, and eBay—that lured victims into remitting payments by wire transfer. Complaints about the town started in 2002.

In the early days, the suspects weren't exactly geniuses. One of the first cases involved a guy posting ads for cell phones, with another man picking up the money. They had collected $2,000 from three victims in the United States, but they were so green that the guy receiving the cash hadn't even bothered using a fake ID. "I found him sitting in an Internet café, chatting online," says Costel Ion, a cop from the nearby town of Pitesti who was then working the cybercrime beat. "He just confessed."

By 2005, Romania had become a dirty word in the world of online commerce.

But most scammers got away with it because only a fraction of victims complained, and only a subset of the complaints triggered investigations. Soon dozens of youngsters in Râmnicu Vâlcea had entered the fray. The number of Internet-fraud victims in the United States began to climb dramatically: Official complaints—only the tip of the iceberg—went from 75,000 in 2002 to 337,000 in 2009, with total losses climbing to $560 million. FBI agents in the United States and Bucharest (the bureau posts agents at embassies to assist with international investigations) homed in on Râmnicu Vâlcea as a hub. The tip-off? Nearly $10 million was wired to the town in 2005.

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Florida.com

The cops were onto them, but the scammers adapted. One early innovation was to ask victims to send the payment not to the seller directly but to an escrow service, a third party with a fake website resembling that of an established company. The stories that were used to con victims got better over the years. To demystify unbelievably low prices for used cars, for example, a common ruse involved a U.S. soldier stationed in Europe who had to sell a vehicle on short notice because he was getting transferred. As potential victims got savvier, the fake sellers began offering to send the car for inspection—asking for no payment except "shipping."

Scammers refined their tricks, hiring native English speakers to draft e-mails to targets in the United States. Specialists emerged: designers of fake websites and phone workers with reassuring voices.

By 2005, Romania had become a dirty word in the world of online commerce, and buyers became wary of sending money to Râmnicu Vâlcea and other Romanian towns. The thieves adapted again. They arranged for payments to be picked up by accomplices in other European countries.

This proved to be a turning point, elevating the industry from that of a small-scale criminal activity to an international organized crime. The crooks in Râmnicu Vâlcea began linking up with a global network of confederates, people who would act as couriers and money launderers for a cut of the take. Many of these so-called arrows were Romanians living in Western Europe and the United States; some were youngsters from Râmnicu Vâlcea who had moved overseas expressly for this purpose. An arrow's job was to go to wire-transfer offices to collect remittances wired by victims, then turn around and wire that money—minus his commission—directly to the scammers.

A little after 11 p.m., Stoica hushes our conversation and tells me to turn around and check out a table across the courtyard, where a small group of flashily dressed young men has just arrived with two blonde women who seem barely out of their teens. The men are all under investigation. "It's a small city," he says.

Defining Râmnicu Vâlcea's city center is a tower shopping mall that looks like a giant glass igloo. The streets around it are lined with gleaming storefronts—leather accessories, Italian fashion. Driving past a block of low-rise buildings with neatly trimmed hedges, Stoica glances at the license plates of vehicles parked on the street, then points at a BMW SUV owned by a guy whom his team charged last year. "I don't know if the people of Râmnicu Vâlcea are too smart or too stupid," Stoica says grimly. "They talk a lot to each

other. One guy learns the job from another. They ask their high school friends, 'Hey, do you want to make some money? I want to use you as an arrow.' Then the arrow learns to do the scams himself."

Michael Macy, a professor of sociology at Cornell University who studies social networks, says Râmnicu Vâlcea's development as a nerve center of cyberfraud may have been driven by the same kinds of factors that drive cities—or areas within cities, like the fashion district in New York—to specialize in a certain industry. "To the extent that there is some expertise required, friends and family members of the original entrepreneurs are more likely to have access to those resources than they would if they were in an isolated location," Macy says.

Gary Dickson, a supervisory agent with the FBI, points out that the public's sympathies, at least in some of the cases that have gone to trial, now seem to lie with the defendants. The argument is "Uh, he was just ripping off Americans," Dickson says.

Amid new construction on what seems like every block, what really stands out in Râmnicu Vâlcea are the money-transfer offices. Some 100,000 people live here, but at least two dozen Western Union storefronts lie within a four-block area downtown. The transfer centers are to Râmnicu Vâlcea what diamond-cutting mills are to Antwerp: They are where the moneymaking business gets done.

Over the past few years, Stoica and Frunza have tapped their own social networks to identify suspects and keep tabs on them. It's not uncommon for the two to find themselves investigating a childhood acquaintance or, conversely, to run into known criminals in social situations. Frunza plays on the same soccer team as a suspect who is under surveillance. Stoica and Frunza both complain that they're fighting an unstoppable tide with limited resources. But they haven't been entirely unsuccessful—in fact, the 2008 case that first revealed the anatomy of Râmnicu Vâlcea's fraud networks stemmed from Stoica's investigation of a young entrepreneur named Romeo Chita.

Money-transfer centers are where the business of digital fraud gets done.

Chita started out as an arrow in the United Kingdom, and he was good. He moved up the ranks and eventually hired a few friends to start his own fraud ring. The Romanian authorities started looking into him in 2005, when he began flashing his cash and buying a new car every few months without any obvious source of income, says Stoica. The

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next year, Chita launched an Internet service provider called NetOne. It was both a money-laundering operation and a way to shield fraudulent activity from investigators, authorities say.

In January 2008, an informer gave Stoica the cell numbers of two men suspected to be working for Chita. The police tapped the phones, and the next day, one of the men sent Chita a text message with money control transfer numbers—unique sequences of digits that the receiver of any wire transfer must provide to pick up cash. Stoica and his team followed up with surveillance of Chita and his associates, establishing what Stoica calls "the money circuit," the route through which the money flowed from victims in the United States to Chita and others.

The group turned out to be a little more sophisticated than the usual Râmnicu scammers. They worked a con known as spear fishing—sending U.S. companies, for example, e-mails that spoofed messages from the IRS, the Department of Justice, or another agency. Leaving behind a Trojan horse computer virus, Chita's group would then obtain the companies' bank account numbers and passwords. They allegedly hired homeless people in Las Vegas to open fake corporate bank accounts that could receive the stolen money.

The same month that Stoica began pursuing Chita, a police officer stopped a car for speeding in the Westlake suburb of Cleveland, Ohio. As he was about to write up the ticket, the cop happened to glance into the back, where he saw a half-dozen cell phones, two computers, several passports, and two dozen receipts for money transfers. He arrested the two young men in the car, who turned out to be Romanian; they were also carrying $63,000. The two men eventually confessed to being arrows for Chita. They had spent most of that winter driving around the Midwest, picking up money from various Western Union and MoneyGram locations. Their confessions led to more wiretaps and surveillance in the United States and Romania, uncovering a network of two dozen accomplices.

The tattooed man leans in ominously and says, "Were you sent by Obama?"

That summer, Romanian authorities and FBI agents conducted a series of raids on both sides of the Atlantic to mop up the gang. Chita spent 14 months in prison before he was granted a provisional release, pending the completion of his trial. He is still free, but his photo remains in the top spot on an organizational chart filed in Stoica's office. Against the

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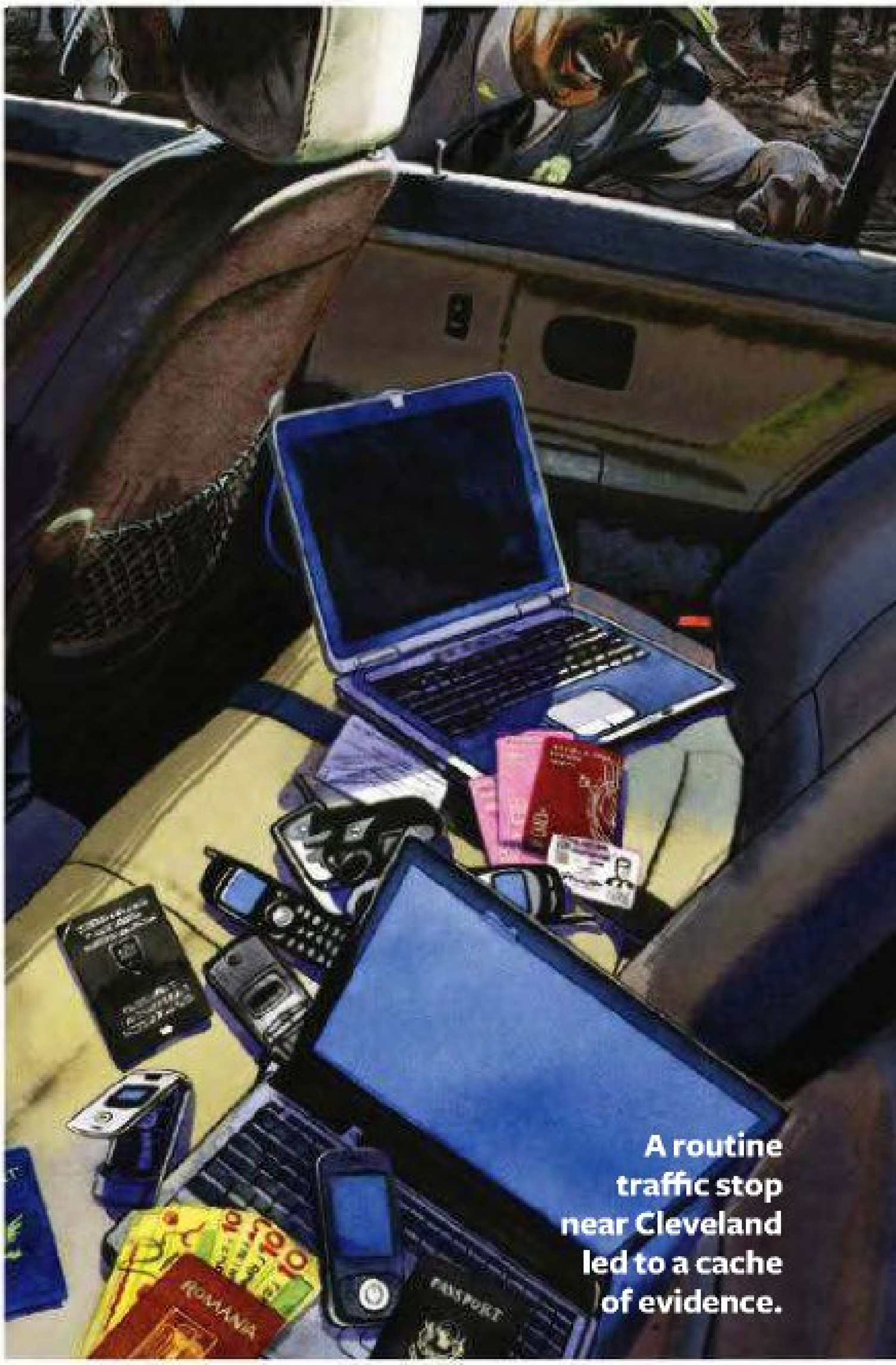
wishes of the two cops, I went looking for this young kingpin. It was a small city, as Stoica said.

A man in Bermuda shorts, canvas shoes, and a white T-shirt introduces himself as Chita's brother, Marian. He licks his lips nervously and fidgets with an iPhone. "Chita's coming," he says, "but he's a little drunk." While we wait in a downtown café, I look out the window at Marian's new Jaguar and ask him how he was able to afford it. He laughs. "You know how much a Jaguar costs in Romania? Only 2,000 euros for someone with connections. You give me the money, I give it to you right now."

A few minutes later, Chita walks around the corner and ambles into the café. Boyishly handsome, dressed in shorts, a light blue polo shirt, and flip-flops, he looks more like a college student than a criminal mastermind. At his side is a muscular young man in dark glasses, with a large tattoo on his arm. He slams a beer bottle down on the table and flexes his hand, as if he's getting ready for a boxing match.

Chita shakes my hand dourly and sits down next to me, looking away. Two other men join our group. A young couple from a corner table come over to greet Chita with fawning smiles and handshakes. The café owner walks by and looks at me gravely. "Good luck," he says.

The tattooed man leans in toward me ominously. "Were you sent by Barack Obama?" he asks. I say that I wasn't, and everyone but me lights cigarettes. Chita asks the couple to



A routine traffic stop near Cleveland led to a cache of evidence.

join Marian as translators, and they agree to stay. The young man tells me to stand, and the bodyguard pats me down, asking if I'm wearing a wire.

"What do you say to the charges against you?" I ask.

"They are fake," Chita says in English.

Chita continues with his defense, and the couple translate enthusiastically. "He doesn't even know how to speak English, so it is impossible for him to post ads or exchange e-mail with buyers," the young woman says. She continues: "He doesn't even have an e-mail address. How can he do fraud on the Internet?" This is hardly a serious defense, but the anonymity afforded by the Web gives it a semblance of credence. And that's exactly what has made it so challenging for law enforcement to track down cybercrooks and prosecute them.

I press Chita about the wiretapped conversations, but the bodyguard interrupts us. Then Chita takes a final drag from his cigarette and rises from his chair. "This interview is over," Marian says.

I am left with the young couple. The young man, Alex Negru, says he has heard about Chita from his friends, has seen his name in the papers. He tells me that he's just received a diploma in engineering from an institution in Bucharest. He's been looking for a job here in Râmnicu Vâlcea, his hometown. "I haven't found anything yet," he says. If this goes on, it seems certain that Chita's network will start to look like a pretty good option.

The cops are trying—there were 188 arrests in Romania in 2010—but it's an endless task. I am reminded of something Frunza told me at the Italian restaurant, about how hopeless it seems to try to clean up Râmnicu Vâlcea for good. "You arrest two of them, and 20 new ones take their place," he said. "We are two police officers, and they are 2,000." ■

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COOL AS A TOMATO

Clichés are old and tired, except when they get mangled. Reader Austin Stack has made a point of writing down the botched ones he's heard over the years, including:

The grass tastes greener elsewhere.
Don't cut your nose off to spoil your face.
It's like winning a losing battle.
We're walking around like lost fish.
That aspired confidence.
It was completely obliverated.

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Scribd.com

They know who you are and what you buy, what you watch online and on TV, what you're e-mailing, and where you are this very minute. Meet your

NEW BIG BROTHER

BY SIMON DUMENCO

ILLUSTRATED BY JEFFREY SMITH

"If the Internet were your living room, there would be crowds of people peeking through the windows," says Mark Ghuneim, CEO of New York digital marketing agency Wiredset, "and you would have unwittingly granted them permission to watch and record everything going on." Among the Peeping Toms: George Orwell's figurative Big Brother—the government—but also, potentially, your employer (and future employers) and marketers, as well as so-called data miners who've made a multibillion-dollar business out of buying and selling intimate details about you.

In an age of social networking and oversharing, our lives are open books. What we do in our homes with our technology doesn't always give us what the law calls "a reasonable expectation of privacy." How easily can others get their hands on all the information floating around cyberspace about you and your family?

Who Can Read Your E-Mail

You just sent a message to a friend about a trip to St. Petersburg you're thinking of taking. Somewhere a computer is probably "reading" that e-mail with keen interest, using sophisticated software to discern your plan to travel as well as the specific destination—which is why you might suddenly start noticing your e-mail provider serving up ads for, say, St. Petersburg hotels and restaurants.

Google, whose Gmail service keys ads to e-mail content, announced in late March that it will be refining its system to serve up more "relevant" ads ("For example," Google helpfully explains, "if you've recently received a lot of messages about photography or cameras, a deal from a local camera store might be interesting"). The company reassures users that the process is "fully automated" and that "no humans read your messages."

Whether you use Gmail or another service—and no matter how much information about yourself you volunteered when setting up your account—any e-mail you send from your home is likely to be associated with a specific IP (Internet protocol) address. In other words, if you set up a Hotmail account under the name Jane Doe, it may be directly traceable to you by law enforcement. (Prosecutors across the United States have successfully sought to subpoena records from Internet service providers to demonstrate such links in criminal cases.) You may think you've sent an anonymous e-mail, but for all practical purposes, it's as good as signed.

Of course, if you use an anonymous service like GuerrillaMail—which allows you to create a temporary e-mail address that lasts just one hour—and log in from a public location such as a coffee shop with free Wi-Fi Internet access, you should be able to cover your e-mail tracks. But such disposable e-mail addresses (which some people use to gain access to websites

On some sites, the price of admission is your surrender of privacy.

that require an e-mail address during the registration process, hoping to avoid spam) aren't practical for the vast majority of us.

And as for e-mail you send from work, beware: Dr. Darren Hayes, a Pace University professor and expert in data security, says, "The legal presumption is that no matter what you do on your employer's network, there should be no expectation of privacy." In other words, your employer doesn't have to tell you that the computer on your desk and everything that passes through it is being automatically monitored.

The San Diego–based Privacy Rights Clearinghouse, which maintains an informative rundown of employee privacy rights (and lack thereof) at privacyrights.org, is fairly blunt about it: "If an electronic mail system is used at a company, the employer owns it and is allowed to review its contents."

Who Can Track Your Web-Surfing History

Whenever you visit a website, chances are the site will insert and/or update a small bit of code on your computer called a cookie, which allows that website to track your visits as well as monitor where else you might end up surfing. As Wiredset's Ghuneim explains, "Marketers buy, collect, and process many data types, including location data, brand preferences, purchase activity, and behavioral data. The data collected by Web browsers adds to each of those areas, and marketers can grab that information as long as it's disclosed in their posted privacy policy."

Michael Fertik, CEO of reputation.com, recommends that you "always browse in privacy mode." (In Firefox, look for Start Private Browsing under the Tools menu; in Internet Explorer, click the Safety link, then select InPrivate Browsing; in Safari, look for Private Browsing under the main menu.) "That might mean," he adds, "that you have to log in every time you go to your banking site, but guess what: That's better anyway." It's important to note that some websites won't function properly unless you allow them to place cookies on your computer. In other words, the price of admission is your surrender of privacy.

Every Web browser allows you to clear cookies after visiting sites. That's a useful tactic if, for instance, you're checking e-mail on a computer that other people can access.

Both Internet Explorer (from Microsoft) and Firefox (from Mozilla) recently added so-called do-not-track features designed to limit the amount of information marketers can collect about you as you surf the Web. So far, though, marketer participation in do-not-track programs amounts

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to self-policing, as there is no force of law behind them. That's why the U.S. Senate's commerce committee has been considering legislation that would mandate the ability of consumers to opt out of being tracked.

Keep in mind that clearing your cookies or turning on a do-not-track feature does not erase your tracks. Your service provider may maintain detailed logs of every site you've visited, and other evidence of your surfing habits may persist on your computer. In 2007, a New Jersey woman was convicted of murdering her husband. Before the crime, she'd entered four words into Google's search box: *how to commit murder*.

Comments left anonymously, or under assumed names, on website message boards are traceable too. The administrator of a site, for instance, can see the IP address of the computer of any posted comment—information that can be subpoenaed by law enforcement. (Some websites even make IP addresses of commenters visible to other commenters to not so subtly encourage civility.)

As for social networks, reputation.com's Fertik maintains that even the most rigorous privacy settings are not good enough: "The social networks will still take your data and give other people access to it. That's their business model. So just assume that no matter what you post, no matter how private you think it is, it's going to find its way to someone else."

While Facebook, for instance, allows you to limit what nonfriends can see, people in your social circle may not have the same scruples about your information. And once information is out there, it can be used against you. In 2010, the American Academy of Matrimonial Lawyers reported that four of five surveyed divorce attorneys reported seeing information from social networks being used in divorce cases.

Who Can Track What You're Watching on TV

In 1988, Congress passed the Video Privacy Protection Act after a D.C. newspaper published Judge Robert Bork's video-rental records during his unsuccessful confirmation hearings for the Supreme Court. Fast forward to 2011: Chances are no matter what you watch on television—through cable or via a service like Netflix—at some level, it's being tracked digitally, seamlessly, and automatically.

In fact, cable companies such as Cablevision have been experimenting with "addressable ads" that deliver commercials tailored to your household. Bob Fetter of Massachusetts-based Pluris Marketing, a company that helps cable providers and other firms conduct such so-called data mining, doesn't think that's always cause for concern: "Sometimes sharing your data leads to a better customer experience." For instance, Disney and Toys"R"Us have participated in Cablevision's tests, and while they don't reveal whom they're targeting, it's obvious that they're interested in reaching, for instance,

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middle-class households with children. Their spots might be more welcome than, say, commercials for erectile-dysfunction drugs. Those who balk at addressable advertising can, of course, opt out. The burden, in other words, is on you, the consumer.

What Your Cell Phone Can Reveal About You

"In the past decade, the stakes for privacy have dramatically changed," says Jules Polonetsky of the D.C.-based advocacy group Future of Privacy Forum. Today, though, even if you do all the right things on your computer—surf in private mode, enable the do-not-track feature, etc.—you are likely being followed more closely than ever, thanks to what you're carrying around in your pocket or purse. "Your cell phone," Polonetsky points out, "is a sophisticated computer that knows all your contacts, including all your friends, and knows your location because you always have it with you."

As the *New York Times* reported this spring, a German politician recently sued his cell phone provider, Deutsche Telekom, to force it to reveal the data it was tracking about him. It turned out that over six months, the company had recorded his exact location, in the form of longitude and latitude coordinates, more than 35,000 times. As the law stands in the United States, cellular providers don't have to reveal to their subscribers what sort of information they routinely collect and to what degree. Just the same, for most users, the benefits may outweigh privacy concerns.

For instance, even cell phones that lack sophisticated global positioning system (GPS) circuitry can determine your location by triangulating your distance to nearby cell phone towers. Good news if you're lost in the Dismal Swamp, of course, and good news for law and order. Both GPS and tower data have successfully been used in court to demonstrate a suspect's proximity to a crime scene.

Verizon, incidentally, has a service that's specifically designed to invade privacy—of children. Verizon Chaperone uses GPS to allow parents to pinpoint the location of their kid's phone at any time (on the theory that kids are entirely inseparable from their mobiles). But the biggest privacy threat to cell phone users, both children and adults, may be one they bring on themselves through services like Foursquare, which lets you publicly check in to locations (for example, announcing to your friends that you're at the mall), and Facebook and Twitter, which let you add your locations to updates and tweets.

In fact, in the winter of 2010, a group of activists launched pleaserobme.com to raise awareness about the danger of broadcasting your location to the world. Indeed, last September, police in Nashua, New Hampshire, busted a burglary ring that targeted homes whose occupants had posted their whereabouts on Facebook, graciously letting thieves figure out exactly when they wouldn't be home. ■

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The Dirty Dozen

How a group of former sorority sisters found peace, purpose, and carpentry skills in New Orleans

BY AIMEE LEE BALL

IPAD EXTRA To watch the women build a house, download the *Reader's Digest* magazine app from the iTunes Store.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY TAMARA REYNOLDS

They are 12 middle-aged women whose hands are more accustomed to French manicures than heavy construction. But here they go again, gripping saws and spackling knives, power drills and nail guns. For the fifth year in a row, the women (and a growing group of supporters) have descended on New Orleans to volunteer with Habitat for Humanity, helping to build houses and redress the ravages of Hurricane Katrina. Last December, the Dirty Dozen, as we'll call them, were hard at work in the still-recovering Upper Ninth Ward, digging out the foundation for a sidewalk fronting a new house and climbing ladders to install soffits in the roof. They joked about measurements that sounded like a Starbucks order: "I need ten and five eighths half-vented," someone shouted, and the response came back: "Nonfat?"

At the week's end, the women exchanged their mud-splattered clothes for clean outfits and made their annual pilgrimage to meet with the family who live in the first house they had helped build: Kewanda Baxter, 35, and her three children, who had lost their home in the hurricane but who had, with amazing grace and strength, endured. Every year since Katrina, there has been a festive get-together with 20-year-old Dominique, 17-year-old Jeremy, 13-year-old Rodney, and their mother. Surrounded by his 12 guardian angels in a local restaurant that night, Rodney beamed. "It feels like my birthday," he said.

Who are these women? They are middle-class mothers, wives, career women, and sorority sisters, now sixty-somethings who happened to see a photo and bio of the Baxters tacked to a board in a yard during their first stint with Habitat in 2006. "I was a single mom for ten years," says Carolyn Brown Cox, a social worker and an actress in Seattle, remembering her emotional reaction. "I just felt like a kindred spirit to this woman. I know what it's like to go to the grocery store and tell your kids that you can't afford soda or candy."

The family coordinator at Habi-

FROM LEFT: Cheryl Josephs Zaccaro, Carolyn Brown Cox, Debbie Brown Britt, Janis Dropkin Smythe, Marilyn Zwick Storch, Sondra Daum Berman, Judith Fagin, Carolyn Macow Leatherwood, Sharon Graber Purcel, Amy Goldberger, Linda Lewis-Moors, Rachelle Galanti Parker (kneeling)

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At work in New Orleans, foreground from left: sisters Sondra Berman, Judith Fagin, and Sherry Flashman.

tat arranged for Cox to speak with Kewanda Baxter, who didn't quite know what to think. "I was kind of shocked. I told her, 'You don't have to send me any money, but my kids aren't doing too well in school. It would help to have a computer.' And then I just thought, If it happens, it happens."

Baxter was stunned when a new PC was delivered. Then the women arranged tutoring to help with the children's schooling, which had been disrupted in the aftermath of the storm. That was followed by the uniforms required by the kids' new charter school. "Kewanda only asked for two sets of clothing for the kids," says Cox. "She gets every drop out of every nickel." But even more important than the financial aid was, and is, the emotional support.

"Nobody ever told me I was doing a great job before," says Baxter. "When I feel like I'm not doing so well, I call or write them. They're my friends, and they're my strength. They tell me: Take a deep breath, take a bath."

Hurricane Katrina actually presented a kind of meteorological bookend for some of the former Sigma Delta Tau sisters. Forty years earlier, they had arrived in New Orleans as freshmen at H. Sophie Newcomb Memorial College (then the women's school at Tulane University), just as Hurricane Betsy ripped through the city, earning the nickname Billion Dollar Betsy for the amount of damage left in her wake. They slept in dorms with no electricity and helped clear Betsy's detritus from the campus. Close friendships were formed in an era of bouffant hairdos and war

protests; after college, there were occasional updates about marriages, children, divorces. But over the years, their lives and careers spread out across the four corners of the country: Sondra Daum Berman became a financial advisor in Florida; Marilyn Zwick Storch did marketing for hospitals in Illinois; Janis Dropkin Smythe produced commercial music in New York. In time, most of them lost touch with one another.

Until Katrina. Cheryl Josephs Zaccaro, a retired occupational therapist from Pittsfield, Massachusetts, hooked up with Habitat first. She slept in a trailer with other volunteers, building low-cost houses, a job for which she had no prior training. Zaccaro began e-mailing her sorority sisters, asking, "Is this something we want to do?" From Texas and Pennsylvania and Georgia, the answers came back: yes, yes, yes! Everyone had sent checks to the relief organizations, but it didn't seem like enough.

Zaccaro returned to Habitat with her sisters ten months later—an act of extraordinary selflessness, since she'd just completed chemotherapy for breast cancer. "But I kept thinking, I get to go home," she says, "while all these people were still homeless, still dealing with the mess." And after hearing the story of Baxter and her children, the group determined to get involved in an even more personal way.

Cheryl Zaccaro with Dominique's baby, D'Jai Blackburn, and Kewanda Baxter.

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When Hurricane Katrina hit in August 2005, the Baxters were forced to evacuate their ground-floor apartment with only the clothes on their backs. Two days later, they took refuge, along with thousands of others, in the Convention Center as the floodwaters rolled down Canal Street. For several days, there was no food except for what had been looted from abandoned stores. "I didn't eat, but I took vitamins and made sure the kids ate," says Baxter. "One day somebody gave me a tomato. After three days, the Louisiana National Guard came in with water and those rations in packs."

The family began a two-month odyssey through Arkansas and Texas. Eventually, Baxter rented a car and drove back to her traumatized city to find that the only possessions she could salvage from her ruined home were three track medals Dominique had won in school. Baxter returned to her job as a custodian with the city's building services, and her office helped arrange housing, first on a cruise ship docked in the Mississippi River, next in a FEMA trailer that turned out to have toxic levels of formaldehyde. Then she heard about the opportunity for an interest-free mortgage from Habitat for Humanity in return for 350 hours of "sweat equity." It was pure serendipity that the women from Tulane were assigned to work on the new Baxter home and fell in love with the family.

The women helped out with the teenagers' immediate needs—football uniforms for the boys, a calculator for math class, high school graduation photos for Dominique. "We're just plugging up holes in the dike so Kewanda can keep her boat afloat," says Cox. "It's women helping women."

A highlight of each trip to New Orleans is a celebratory dinner—party of 16, tables pushed together, with so much hugging that it's hard to actually eat. Baxter always brings a little gift for everyone; this year, it was a photograph of the newest family member, Dominique's baby girl, D'Jai Blackburn. Baxter herself became a mother at age 14, and the women quietly acknowledge their disappointment that this cycle of early pregnancy continues, but they are determined to help Dominique realize her ambitions. Last summer, she became the first in her family to graduate from high school, and Smythe and Cox flew to New Orleans for the ceremony. Dominique now says she'd like to be a medical assistant. Baxter attends classes for a high

"WE WERE GIRLS WHEN WE MET," SAYS SMYTHE, "AND WHEN WE REUNITE, WE ARE THOSE GIRLS AGAIN."

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At the Baxter home, from left: Dominique Baxter, Cheryl Zaccaro, Carolyn Cox, Kewanda Baxter, Janis Smythe, and Jeremy and Rodney Baxter.

school equivalency diploma, despite the overwhelming responsibilities of keeping up house payments and caring for her family, including her new granddaughter. She had never been interested in reading, but the women encouraged her and sent books; now she carries a book everywhere she goes and loves to discuss her new interests. "I haven't figured out what I'm good at yet," she says. "That's why I like to talk to these women."

The Baxters' new house was furnished with the help of the Red Cross and FEMA, so the Tulane women decided that one of their priorities would be maintaining the family's truck, which is a lifeline for them: On a typical day, Baxter drives to work at city hall, picks up the boys for tutoring after school, drives Dominique to her job, brings the boys home, and then gets her daughter at 11 p.m. or later. When all four tires on the truck went bald, the group bought four new steel-belted radials. Then, a week before Dominique was due to give birth, the truck's motor gave out. "I was hysteri-

cal," says Baxter. "The hospital was 30 minutes away." The Tulane group arranged for a monthlong car rental and recently helped finance a gently used smoky-gray Volkswagen Passat.

The Dirty Dozen have their own share of middle-aged problems, but for one week a year, they put aside personal concerns to do whatever is asked of them in New Orleans. "Most of the women in our group are currently in or have been in leadership roles," says Linda Lewis-Moors, a hospital administrator from Norwich, New York. "But they are all willing followers and strong team members when that's what is called for."

For Carolyn Macow Leatherwood, a former CPA from Houston, it's the work itself that becomes more meaningful each year. "We moan and groan about minor issues in our lives, but seeing people struggling here, and then seeing an opportunity to fix things, is amazing."

For all 12 of the Dirty Dozen, the annual pilgrimage has become something of a magical time machine. "We were girls together, meeting the world for the first time," says Smythe. "And here we are 40-plus years later, women who have lived those lives with triumphs and tragedies. No one has been spared, and I'm not sure any of it turned out quite as we'd planned. But when we reunite, we are those girls again." ■

DO MORE

The following organizations welcome volunteers and donations to help rebuild New Orleans.

Habitat for Humanity
habitat-nola.org
504-861-4121

Rebuilding Together
rebuildingtogether.org
800-473-4229

St. Bernard Project
stbernardproject.org
504-277-6831

Look >>

SEE THE WORLD DIFFERENTLY

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Stroke Twice

What appears to be a colorful painting made up of fine brush-strokes is actually the work of Lake Superior on the bottom of a boat. All summer long, the cold, clear waters swirl unseen designs on sailboats' hulls and keels. It's only when the vessels are put up on blocks at the season's end that the painterly touch of waves and sand is in evidence (as here, in Bayfield, Wisconsin).

JEFF RENNICKE

I Recommend

Bob and Suzanne Wright, cofounders of Autism Speaks

"Sallie Tisdale's remarkable article is a poignant and telling look at what so many parents of adults with autism feel every day. Autism can be all-consuming and unrelenting, and often even more challenging as a child grows into adulthood. But this story ultimately highlights each parent's most profound responsibility: helping your child live the most fulfilling life possible, infused with as much joy and love as you can collectively muster."

My Daughter, Myself

Caring for a disabled child is a job like no other. Sallie Tisdale opens up about the fear, the stress, the hope, and the love.

ADAPTED FROM ***Harper's Magazine***

We moved into our house more than 12 years ago. Robert lived two doors down. He was about 11 and had just begun learning how to ride a skateboard. We had a basketball hoop at our house, and all three of our children played. Over the wheels of the skateboard, I heard the ball clanging against the hoop.

Gradually, the whir down the street grew faster, the landings softer. I heard the wheels less often and then not at all. After a while, Robert was gone, off to college. Our two sons moved out within a few months of each

TOP LEFT: ILLUSTRATED BY GRAFILU; RIGHT: SEYMOUR HEWITT/GETTY IMAGES

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other, and I heard the basketball less often and then not at all.

My daughter, Annie, still lives with us. She is 26 and at the moment is sitting on the porch, looking out at the street. Soon she will come in and pace for a while, her head down. Later she will read the first few pages of a book—the same book, the same pages that she read last week and the week before and will read again tomorrow.

My husband, Bob, and I adopted Annie and her brother, Rafael, when she was a toddler and he was about nine years old. We already had a seven-year-old at home. We knew Rafael was Deaf, so we were happy to be told that Annie was healthy. We met the children at an orphanage in Guatemala City. Rafael was freshly scrubbed and stood at attention, scared. A young woman handed me Annie—a tiny, skinny thing, ridden with parasites. I set her down to get her a bottle and she fell over, unable to stand.

The Guatemalan doctor who examined Annie told us she was severely retarded and might never walk or talk. "Take her back and get a different one," he said.

Four days later—four days of long-distance calls, surges of hope and fear—we flew home to Portland. In time, Rafael discovered bicycles, scrambled eggs, and American Sign Language. Annie began to walk and talk. But the malnourishment and night terrors were more difficult for her to overcome. Intensely shy with strangers, she was cheerful and amiable with us and often invented little games. As she gained weight and strength, she began to run and sing and dance. But she was very small and way behind in developmental milestones. We had genetic testing and hearing tests and all kinds of exams done, but no clear diagnosis emerged. She met the milestones—behind and slow, but she met them. And then she sort of stopped meeting them.

At first, most people don't notice anything unusual about her ...
Then they find out how old she is.

I know now that Annie has a form of high-functioning autism, shading into or interwoven with severe learning disorders. At first, most people don't notice anything unusual about her. (She's been on jury duty twice in the past few years.) Then people find out how old she is, that she still lives at home and doesn't work or socialize with people her age. She gets along well in a casual conversation, especially with people she knows. She goes to the gym, rides the bus. She is usually patient with children. She can

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play soccer and dodgeball. She can beat me at games like Sequence that require counting and pattern recognition, but she can't follow a recipe or make change. She can put jigsaw puzzles together, but she writes laboriously and can't spell. She reads slowly, often going over the same paragraph several times—not, I've come to realize, entirely for comprehension; she reads the same words again and again because she likes to do that.

Shy with strangers, Annie was cheerful and amiable at home.

The Centers for Disease Control estimate that one out of 110 eight-year-olds is now diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder: a lifelong, incurable neurological developmental disorder that is disabling even when mild. ASDs are considered the second-most common developmental disability, though many health professionals are still unfamiliar with what a "spectrum disorder" is—that it manifests in many ways, from mild to severe, that every person experiences it a little differently. Twenty, even ten years ago, autism was thought to be fairly rare, and it is unclear whether the increase in numbers reflects better diagnostic skill or a real rise in the disorder. (Karl Taro Greenfeld—whose brother, Noah, is one of the more famous autistic people in the world, thanks to a series of books written about him by his father—calls autism "among the most financially successful and mediagenic diseases ever.") Rates vary in different parts of the country, possibly reflecting environmental causes, or professional experience, or something not understood at all. ASDs occur four times as often in boys as in girls and tend to run in families. From 10 to 30 percent of those with the disorder have some form of epilepsy and up to 50 percent have some degree of retardation.

Autism is defined by global deficits in information processing and difficulty with language, with memory, and with managing tasks. Many people diagnosed with autism score below 70 on intelligence tests, though such tests are problematic with people who do not use language in normal ways. It is undeniably true,

COURTESY SALLIE TISDALE

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however, that people with autism are often functionally retarded. Skills and deficits are unpredictable; every area of ordinary life is disordered in some way. There is consistency of a kind—in the poverty of expression and of what is called executive function: the ability to plan and organize, to focus and attend, to look ahead, to respond creatively to change.

Most people know about autism from portrayals on television and in films—behaviors like spinning, shouting, finger-flicking, head-banging, toe-walking; children who play alone in a corner or people who cannot make eye contact and never smile. These are common symptoms of what is sometimes called classic autism—a severe disability that almost always manifests in early childhood.

High-functioning forms of autism are harder to diagnose. Some researchers believe that we are all on the same spectrum, that autism is simply a far end of neurological development. Thus, I hear the phrase *on spectrum* for those with diagnosed autism and *neurotypical* to mean the rest of us.

Autistic people tend to be overwhelmed by sensory data. Sounds and textures and visual details cannot easily be edited or prioritized. People with autism tend to focus on simple and immediate and generally solitary tasks, on sameness and predictability, especially when they're tense (which is often, in this noisy world). Extreme anxiety and depression are common.

Poor social skills are a mark of the disorder; in particular, a lack of what is called reciprocity—the ability to listen, to empathize, to respond in kind. What do social courtesies mean when words are hard to understand? How does one engage in small talk when facial expressions have no meaning, when nuance and humor are opaque and metaphors make no sense?

Annie is a peculiar, sweet, amusing person, irritating and courageous. She is a gift and a conundrum.

Annie cannot have a conversation while the radio is on. She simply doesn't hear me talking. It's easy to give her too much information, too many instructions at one time. She tends to eat the same food for breakfast and lunch for weeks at a time and to wear the same kind of clothes, regardless of the weather. She often forgets to take her medicine. And I remember, every day, that Annie's condition is relatively mild, that she is high-functioning—that it could be so much harder.

With higher-functioning people, the extreme behaviors are often absent.

Instead, they may be preoccupied with a narrow subject like bus schedules or calendars. Annie copies: math problems from an old textbook, words from the dictionary. Sometimes she copies for hours.

It took me a long time to begin to understand what was wrong, what was needed, what to do. I still make a lot of mistakes, but I've learned to break down tasks step by step, sometimes into one word or phrase at a time. I now stop talking when she gets upset. I've also learned to insist on her discomfort sometimes, to show her she can and should do some of the things adults do, even when those things are really hard.

I spend hours each week on the maddening bureaucracy (and in gratitude to the immense largesse) of Social Security. We have multiple medications to manage, trips to the doctor, calls to various professionals, and, always, planning how to help her stay busy, find her way, make a life.

Annie paces for hours in her big running shoes, back and forth in the kitchen. I sometimes think of her repetitive behaviors as a blanket over stress or depression or boredom. And it sometimes drives me mad.

"Stop pacing, please," I finally say. "Okay," she says, head down, continuing to pace. An hour later I am getting ready for bed, and she is still pacing across the kitchen floor. Clomp clomp clomp.

"Stop pacing!" I holler.

"Okay!" she says, head down, pacing back and forth.

Annie is a peculiar, sweet, amusing person, irritating and courageous. She is a gift and a conundrum and a ceaseless surprise. I used to say she was born to be a child—she was radiant, amiable, a great pleasure. She still makes me laugh almost every day.

About 65 million Americans are caring for ill or disabled family members in any given year, according to the National Family Caregivers Association. For many people, this is a brief period in midlife when they help care for aging parents. About 12 percent of the population have some kind of defined disability, but exactly how many live where, how many people are providing daily care for spouses or parents or siblings, no one really knows. The Census Bureau has begun tracking the number of grandparents rearing their grandchildren, but it doesn't follow parents caring for disabled adult children.

These numbers are going up. Better health care means that disabled and chronically ill people live longer. People who once would have been institutionalized in childhood now stay home with their families and attend local schools. Decades of government policy and a Supreme Court decision, *Olmstead v. L.C.*, have established that public services for all disabled people must be provided in the least restrictive and most integrated environment possible. States are required

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to create community-based services, but the broad vision of deinstitutionalization—a new society of supervised or modified places to live and a network of support services—has never materialized. The community-based alternatives that do exist—group homes and respite centers, supported workplaces, day centers, social work, skills training, and assisted-living facilities—are overwhelmed. For a good many people, the least restrictive environment is the family home.

In spite of (and sometimes because of) policies that mandate community-based care, it is easier to find services for some disabilities than for others, easier in one year than in another. That the family is often the best caregiver can lead to the belief that the family doesn't need help. Parents, writes researcher Nancy Breitenbach, find that they must "demonstrate without a doubt that they are unequal to the task. Doing one's duty in difficult circumstances is seldom enough to merit aid."

On my toughest days, when I am full of resentment and sadness, I still know there is no one else who should take care of her. She's mine. I chose her, I love her, she knows no other home. It is not the money, or even the time. It is simply that I had other plans.

Social workers talk about the burden of caregivers. They distinguish between objective burden—physical labor—and subjective burden, described by two Israeli social workers, Chaya Schwartz and Lilit Hadar, as "the gamut of negative emotional reactions to caregiving, such as stress, tension, anger, worry, sadness, and feelings of guilt and shame." Considerable time and effort have been expended to prove that subjective burden is the harder to bear. I could have saved them the trouble.

Annie doesn't think like me; my frustrations are not the same as hers, and neither are my satisfactions.

Caregiving is not benign, not just another kind of job. It can and does unbalance families and break up marriages, disrupt careers, lead to financial ruin and ill health. People caring for disabled adult children have higher rates of depression than their peers do.

No one starts a family believing that a child will cause bankruptcy and illness. No one expects heartbreak; we are psychically protected against such fears, bound in a tight biological web to hope for the best with every child. I remember how readily (albeit with considerable naiveté) I became the mother of a Deaf child—I had some idea, at least, of

what to expect, how to prepare.

The element of surprise is part of the struggle. We were told often not to worry—not to rely on tests, schoolwork, even on Annie's unhappiness, as a prediction of what lay ahead. We delayed sending her to school, and then everyone agreed that she should repeat first grade. She was diagnosed with multiple learning disabilities—a jumble of average and below-average and way-below-average scores. An IEP—individualized education program—was written, setting goals and a "modified" curriculum. She never reached most of the goals, but every year she was promoted a grade. The school's emphasis was always on mainstreaming, keeping her out of special education classrooms as much as possible.

By middle school, she was tense and nervous much of the time, increasingly lonesome but unable to make friends. She spent hours on homework, but even with all the modifications, she couldn't keep up. A few teachers simply flunked her. But middle school is hard for a lot of kids; we assumed she would adjust.

Her neighborhood high school was a huge complex with almost 2,000 students; just walking through the halls was overwhelming. We moved her to a magnet school with small classes. She seemed a little happier there, though she tells me now that high school was the worst time of her life. She had few friends and no dates, and except for watching the occasional basketball or soccer game, she did little away from home.

"We don't want to label her," I was told again and again. Labels follow children for their whole lives. Labels make it hard to get a job, hard to get into college.

Our state required a battery of standardized tests in high school, and she squeaked by with the minimum passing score a few times. Her federally mandated transition plan was merely a suggestion that she try some classes at the local community college. Her IEP team was blithely optimistic, and she was awarded a regular diploma.

She tried remedial classes at the community college, but she couldn't

The author and her daughter in a joyful moment

COURTESY SALLIE TISDALE

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tolerate the noise—the people, the stimulation, what felt like constant pressure—and quit. She got a part-time job with the help of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation, washing dishes in a restaurant. She was so game about it, so serious and determined, but it was all too much, too exhausting and stressful and scary. She quit. One December day she began hallucinating—she heard voices, screaming car alarms, people breaking into the house.

It's still hard for me to remember that time. Annie started seeing a psychiatrist, and I held my breath. She responded to a small dose of antipsychotic medication and has never shown any signs of schizophrenia. The psychiatrist finally led us to a diagnosis that seemed to fit: Pervasive Developmental Disorder—Not Otherwise Specified. PDD is more of a description than an explanation, an umbrella term that includes autism and other, rarer developmental disorders. People who fit some, but not all, of the criteria for different specific disorders are considered *not otherwise specified*—PDD-NOS.

And still, surprises. She didn't feel well, slept long hours, lost weight. She tried taking classes again and quit again. She eventually got another on-call, part-time, minimum-wage job—and struggled grimly and finally quit. She lost more weight and got quieter and sicker until the day came when we got yet another diagnosis: autoimmune polyendocrine disorder. This syndrome means that multiple hormonal systems have failed, but the most significant problem is adrenal insufficiency. Her body doesn't make stress hormones—the constantly shifting balance of chemicals with which we meet the challenges of even an ordinary day. For that, she needs carefully calibrated medications several times a day. She has to manage her weight, her blood sugar, and her blood pressure, as well as stress and trauma.

We applied for Supplemental Security Income, the form of Social Security meant for disabled people. According to SSI criteria, Annie is fully disabled, and she receives a small but reliable monthly check. (Her condition is reviewed every three years.) In turn, SSI made her eligible for Medicaid, a blessing for which I am more grateful than for any other help we've received. But in one of the more maddening moments I've experienced, she was denied services by the county on the grounds that she has no "adaptive impairment"—in other words, she can manage life just fine—and because her diagnosis wasn't established by the time she was 18—in effect, because she hadn't been labeled.

This is no small thing, for Annie has been denied money for skills training and access to most opportunities for supported employment or housing. I recently called a private nonprofit charity in Portland that offers support

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for developmentally disabled adults. They wouldn't even accept an application without county eligibility.

Much research has been devoted to the experience of parents who care for disabled children, but it generally is done by social workers and is filled with numbing jargon and exaggerated cheeriness. As a parent struggling to accept my situation, I'm supposed to do "benefit finding" by using a "meaning-based coping process" and seeking "positive-toned emotions." I should "positively evaluate" my circumstances, "thus minimizing or mitigating the negative implications." Further, "it is essential to set goals and work toward achieving them," however small they may be. Parents do identify genuine rewards—from simply enjoying their children's company to delighting in their achievements. But in all the studies I have read, rewards are harder to identify as the children grow, getting bigger and heavier while still needing much of what they needed when they were small.

Ambivalence is a normal state for me. It is hard to articulate what I seem to have lost, because it is something I never had. Annie was never going to go to law school—we knew that. Eventually we knew she was not even going to drive a car. What I miss is something vague and dreamy about a daughter growing up. I have fantasies of high school girls giggling in a bedroom behind a closed door, of long phone calls. I feel grief for the past, for all that there was none of, and grief for the future, for what there may be none of yet to come. Every parent loses a child, several children, as each successive child passes into the next—the chrysalis of the infant becomes the toddler, the toddler gives way to the child, the child to the youth, and finally the adult. This is one element of being a parent, of being alive, though there is an enduring sorrow in realizing not that the child has died but that the adult anticipated will never be born.

I feel sad and sorry for myself or pissed off, and then I feel petty because I'm sad and sorry for myself, because I'm complaining when things could be so much worse. She's not aggressive or incontinent. She can walk and make herself a sandwich and sleep through the night. And we're lucky, because as late as it was in coming and as vague as it is in explaining things, we did eventually get a diagnosis. How many thousands of people struggle with adult children who are simply immature, addicted, irresponsible? What about all the people who are barely holding on to a crappy job, missing car payments and rent, forgetting to take their medicine and use birth control—the many people who have never been diagnosed as anything but slackers or losers and may in fact have high-functioning autism or mild cognitive impairment or learning disabilities but qualify for exactly nothing?

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A teenage Annie with the family dog, Mango

Long-term studies of people with autism are not reassuring. Very few go to college, are employed, or lead independent lives. The supports of school are removed, and nothing takes their place. Karl Taro Greenfeld notes that for severely autistic people, "graduation is perhaps the saddest day in their lives."

I work part-time as a nurse. I come home and thaw out something and we eat. Then I check e-mail and pay bills and do accounts for more than two hours—balancing our checkbook and her checkbook. By turns she has been testy and worn out. I am frustrated and testy myself. She resists my questions until finally I almost force her to lie down so I can check her orthostatic blood pressures. And they're not great, which means her kidney function may be off again, and that means another call to the endocrinologist and more adjustment of medication. I have, finally, started getting some traction on my own writing, just started to focus again. But to do so I have been pulling back from exactly this—the daily chores and details. I am constantly reordering my priorities. She cannot do this alone.

My resentment, my frustration vanishes when Annie is threatened, when I am talking to doctors or to Social Security or standing between her and a hard world. I worry about the long-term side effects of her medications and about what happens if I can't keep paying her extra bills. The most terrifying threat, the one all caregivers and their families must face, is the future. One day after a therapist asked Annie how she saw the future, she walked in the door, burst into tears, and wailed: "What's going to happen if you die?"

I keep waiting for a singular passion, the kind that sometimes comes with high-functioning autism, something that would help her define her life. The few studies of autistic adults show that a particular interest is a source of happiness—what the doctors would call "a good outcome." But quality of life is hard to measure in people who express themselves in unusual ways. To be neurally atypical is to be wired differently. Annie doesn't think like me; my frustrations are not the same as hers, and neither are my satisfactions. She may not miss what I would be missing if my life were hers;

COURTESY SALLIE TISDALE

Harper's.com

she might not value what she had if her life were mine. What is intimacy for her, and does she really want or need it? She thinks she wants a boyfriend, a social life, but shies away when either comes near.

I try to look ahead. There is progress. I think she may someday be ready to try supported living away from us. As I write, I sense a spike of maturity in her. She's having a good week, a good month. Doesn't everyone have bad days, bad weeks, bad years? There are days when her blood sugar is off, days when she is lonesome or bored, days when the future seems vague and scary. I don't want to deny her the right to struggle, to change, to have bad days.

In a more expansive view, my sorrow and irritation stem almost entirely from the belief that she could be different, should be different, and that my life could and should be different. But what's wrong with this soft summer day and her slow pacing in the garden, humming to herself while I wash the dishes? I think, She was born to be a child, and in the next breath, I realize how my thought condemns her. She was born to be herself, and nothing more or less than that.

A few days later, a friend is telling me about his teenage daughter, their discovery that she has unexpected health problems likely to linger.

"It's such a tragedy," he says.

And suddenly, I am on his daughter's side.

"Don't say that," I tell him. "Don't ever say to her, and don't say to yourself, that there is any tragedy in who she is. She is what she is." ■

Annie is now 27. She has recently been accepted for the job development and skills training she'd been previously denied by the county. She still lives with her parents.

Sallie Tisdale's most recent book is *Women of the Way: Discovering 2,500 Years of Buddhist Wisdom* (HarperCollins).

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THIS MOVIE IS SO ...

Some things are better shorter, like these film reviews condensed into four words or fewer:

The Invisible Man—"Claude Rains is unwatchable."

Bambi—"Mommy becomes trophy wife."

Twister—"Whirlwind romance."

Braveheart—"Mad Macs."

The Birds—"Coo d'etat."

The 40-Year-Old Virgin—"Long time no she."

The Devil Wears Prada—"Satin worship."

From *Four Word Film Reviews*, by Benj Clews & Michael Onesi (Adams Media)

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Back to Nature

Do whales hold the secret to cutting our energy consumption? Can sharks reduce hospital infections? A new field of research draws on nature to overcome the limits of human creativity.

BY SHAUN PETT

The Wright brothers didn't have to look far for ideas when building their airplane: They studied birds. And Velcro was born when a Swiss engineer picked burrs off his clothing.

The act of copying nature to address a design problem isn't new, but over the past decade, the practice has moved from obscure scientific journals and into the mainstream. It even has a name: biomimicry. Its advocates view nature as not just a resource to be mined but also a mentor.

Here are five natural sources of inspiration for inventions that are already transforming society.

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IMAGE SOURCE/CORBIS; INSETS: COURTESY SHARKLET

CLEANER SOLUTIONS

Fouling—the slimy growth that collects on ships' hulls—is an expensive nuisance to ship-owners and is often remedied with potentially harmful copper-based paints. But University of Florida engineering professor Anthony Brennan thinks he's found a clean solution thanks to an unlikely ally: sharks. Brennan noticed that the microscopic toothlike pattern of their scales prevents algae and barnacles from sticking to their bodies. Using that insight, he created Sharklet, a pattern that mimics shark scales and reduces fouling by 85 percent, as compared with smooth surfaces. But there's more! Dangerous bacteria can't adhere to Sharklet either. So its producers—aware that thousands of people die annually from hospital-acquired infections—developed the pattern into a material that can be applied to a hospital's high-risk areas, such as bed rails, bedside control panels, and tray tables.

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NICO SMIT/VEER; INSET: STEVE ALLEN/GETTY IMAGES

QUIETER RIDES

Japan's Shinkansen bullet trains seamlessly zip passengers between the country's major cities at speeds of up to 185 mph. But things haven't always run so smoothly. During initial test runs, whenever the trains went from the outdoors and into a narrow tunnel at high speed, they produced a sonic boom that rattled windows some 400 yards away. Seeking a solution, engineer and avid birder Eiji Nakatsu asked himself if there was some living thing that manages sudden changes in air resistance as a part of daily life. There was: the kingfisher. It dives from the air, which is a low-resistant medium, and into water, a high-resistant one, with only a small splash. By redesigning the nose of the bullet train in the image of the kingfisher's beak, engineers reduced noise and cut electricity usage. And saved a lot of windows in the process.

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COOLER BUILDINGS

Here was the dilemma: Architect Mick Pearce had to design a building in his native city of Harare, Zimbabwe, that would remain cool under the scorching African sun. The catch: do it without air-conditioning, which is expensive to install and maintain there. Pearce found a worthy predecessor to study in the mounds of termites. The insects, it was believed, cooled their mud homes using an ingenious system that catches breezes at the base of the mounds. Following their lead, Pearce's design uses fans to suck fresh air from the building's atrium and blow it upward through hollow spaces under the floors and then into offices through baseboard vents. Electricity costs are one tenth that of a comparable air-conditioned building, and Pearce's structure uses 35 percent less energy than six regular Harare buildings combined.

JOCHEN SCHLENKER/MASTERFILE

BETTER FANS

While browsing in a gift shop one day, Pennsylvania biologist Frank Fish came across a sculpture of a humpback whale. He was surprised to find bumps on the "wrong" side—the front edge—of the flipper. Conventional engineering wisdom said that a smooth leading edge reduced drag, whereas a ragged edge increased it. If the sculpture was anatomically correct, everything Fish had learned on the subject would be turned on its head. And it was. Far from being a hindrance, Fish discovered, those flipper bumps, or tubercles, actually reduced drag and improved aerodynamics, allowing the whale to maneuver using less energy. Today, Fish's WhalePower Corporation develops and markets tubercle-enhanced fan blades that move 25 percent more air than conventional fan blades while using 20 percent less electricity.

INSET: COURTESY WHALEPOWER

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ENERGY SAVERS

Found in the rain forests of Central and South America, the morpho butterfly is famous for its iridescent blue wings. Grind up these wings, however, and you'll get a drab powder. The butterfly's hue is an optical illusion called structural color. That is, the gorgeous color is created by the way light hits it—some light waves get reflected, others absorbed. Research into the morpho has resulted in such commercial applications as low-power computer screens, counterfeit-proof currency and charge cards, and fibers that can "mirror" a rainbow's range of tints without polluting dyes. ■

EMMANUELLE BONZAMI/VEER; INSET: COURTESY DONNA SGRO

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25 THINGS YOUR EYE DOCTOR WON'T TELL YOU

JOSE LUIS PELAEZ/GETTY IMAGES

fiordkaff.com

BY MICHELLE CROUCH

fiordkeef.com

WE ASKED 13 OPTOMETRISTS AND OPHTHALMOLOGISTS AROUND THE COUNTRY FOR AN INSIDE VIEW OF WHAT THEY DO. WHY DO GLASSES COST SO MUCH? WHAT DO WE REALLY NEED TO KNOW ABOUT LASIK? AND WHAT ARE WE DOING THAT WE'RE GOING TO REGRET? THEIR ANSWERS WILL CHANGE THE WAY YOU TREAT YOUR EYES.

WE SEE SOME STRANGE THINGS UNDER YOUR LIDS

"Superglue for artificial nails looks a lot like artificial tears, and people sometimes grab the wrong bottle. They literally glue their eyelids together, and we have to cut their eyelashes to get them apart. We probably see that once a month. Read the label before you put anything in your eye."

Robert Noecker, MD, professor of ophthalmology at the University of Pittsburgh

"I once had a patient who thought she had lost a contact lens. We found it behind her eyelid five years later. It's not uncommon to lose a contact that way—they can end up in spots where you can't feel them."

Janice Jurkus, OD, professor at the Illinois College of Optometry, Chicago

WE WISH YOU WOULDN'T DO THAT

"Don't just grab any old bottle of eyedrops out of your medicine cabinet when a new problem comes up. If you have an infection, steroid drops might make the redness look better, but the infection could get worse. I've had to remove people's eyes because of that."

Brian Bonanni, MD, an ophthalmologist at Gotham LASIK, New York City

"Many of you seem to think you can go on with life as normal immediately after I dilate your eyes, but it'll be two or three hours before you can do anything that requires concentrated visual attention. Sometimes people get irritated that they can't read a 12-page document."

Paul Harris, OD, associate professor at the Southern College of Optometry, Memphis

"Pinkeye isn't always benign—a number of patients end up with light sensitivity and even vision loss. But many physicians treat it with antibiotics that won't help if the cause is a virus. We do a rapid test for adenovirus—if that's what you have, we treat it very differently than if your pinkeye is bacterial."

Robert Sambursky, MD, an ophthalmologist in Sarasota, Florida

"No, it's not okay to wait for symptoms to appear. Some blinding eye diseases have few warning signs before they've taken away your vision. A yearly exam is the only way to catch things early." *Paul Harris*, OD

JUST SAY "NO, THANKS"

"Some doctors pressure patients to have cataract surgery right away, but if it creates financial problems for you, there's usually no harm in waiting. Cataracts rarely hurt you—they just make it hard to see, like looking out of a dirty window."

Robert Noecker, MD

"If you have dry eyes, think twice if your optometrist wants to insert punctal plugs to prevent tears from draining out of your eyes. They're a profit maker, but they're not appropriate for everyone. Try artificial tears or an omega-3 supplement first."

Paul Harris, OD

THE UPS AND DOWNS OF EYE-CARE COSTS

"Chains that advertise their low prices don't always have the best deals. *Consumer Reports* found that LensCrafters and Pearle Vision, two of the biggest chains, charge higher prices for frames, on average, than doctors' offices and independent shops—even with discount coupons. [The least expensive provider, according to *Consumer Reports*: Davis Vision. Costco got the top combined score.]" *Paul Harris*, OD

"When I had a private practice, my optical [department] couldn't even buy lenses and frames from my supplier for the price you can get from places like Walmart."

Optometrist at a Walmart in Utah

"If you're on a budget, ask me if I can put new lenses in your old frames. Sometimes your frames are really worn or don't fit the new lenses, but often I can do it." *Janice Jurkus*, OD

TAKE EXTENDED-WEAR CONTACTS OUT BEFORE BED. YOUR CHANCE OF INFECTION IS 10 TO 15 TIMES GREATER IF YOU SLEEP IN THEM."

Brian Bonanni, MD

"Want to save money by buying your eyewear online? Ask me for your full prescription, including your pupillary distance. I may tell you I think it's a bad idea, but we are required to give you what you need." *Paul Harris*, OD

"If you're over 60 and considering LASIK, wait until you develop a cataract. Then we can fix your vision as part of the cataract surgery, and your

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insurance will be more likely to pay for it." *Robert Noecker, MD*

WE KNOW HOW TO MAKE YOUR EYES FEEL BETTER

"Get the contact lens solution I recommend. Researchers study the contact lens material and the care-system chemicals to figure out which combinations will be most comfortable for your eyes. Most store brands are just ReNu MultiPlus, which is fine in some cases but not the best choice in others." Optometrist at a Walmart in Utah

"Eyedrops (any kind) sting less if you keep them in the refrigerator." *Janice Jurkus, OD*

LASIK: READ THE SMALL PRINT

"I worked in a high-volume LASIK chain, and there was always pressure to do the surgery on people who shouldn't have it. Wearing contacts distorts the shape of the cornea, and some patients need to be out of them for a few weeks before you do the procedure. But if you tell them to hold off that long, they might not come back. So we'd be pressured to do the surgery sooner." Ophthalmologist in New York City

"Any place that requires a deposit before you've been examined or doesn't let you speak to the surgeon in advance—those are bad signs. You want a doctor who's accessible in case of problems and who's willing to say you're not a good candidate for LASIK. Of course, sometimes patients go somewhere else and get the procedure done anyway." *Eric Donnenfeld, MD,* clinical professor of ophthalmology at New York University

"READING IN DIM LIGHT WON'T HURT YOUR EYES. THE WORST THAT MIGHT HAPPEN IS THAT YOU GET A HEADACHE."
Eric Donnenfeld, MD

"Those places that advertise $399 an eye? Suddenly there's an extra fee because you have astigmatism or because you want custom LASIK. It ends up costing almost as much as a place that doesn't do such aggressive marketing." *Brian Bonanni, MD*

A FEW FINAL TIPS

"Never use tissues or toilet paper to clean your eyeglasses. Paper is made of wood, and it will scratch your lenses. I like to use my tie because it's silk and really smooth." *Robert Noecker, MD*

"Every day, we have people come in who were blowing leaves or hammering a nail, and now they have a piece

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of metal sticking out of their eye. If you're hitting something with force or doing something high-velocity, wear safety glasses or goggles."

Robert Noecker, MD

"Polarized sunglasses are great at reducing glare, but they can make it difficult to see the LCD on your cell phone or navigation system. It's harder to see an ATM screen when you've got polarized sunglasses on too." *Janice Jurkus*, OD

"Most people know that UV radiation can damage skin, but they don't realize it's also bad for eyes. You wear your sunglasses only when it's sunny? That's like saying 'I only smoke sometimes.' Wear sunglasses big enough to block the light from above and below—they should have thick sides or wrap around. If you wear contacts, ask for UV coating."

Stephen Cohen, OD,
past president of the
Arizona Optometric Association

"Despite what generations of parents have told their kids, carrots aren't the best food for your eyes. That honor goes to spinach, kale, and other dark, leafy veggies." *Andrea Thau*, OD,
associate clinical professor at
the SUNY College of Optometry

SHOULD YOU BUY YOUR RX SUNGLASSES ONLINE?

The appeal

- You can sift through more frames than any chain store could stock.
- A 2010 survey by *Consumers' Checkbook* found that identical pairs of prescription glasses cost, on average, about 45 percent less online.

The drawbacks

- You can't try frames on. Many sites—including framesdirect.com and eyebuydirect.com—let you upload a picture and try on frames virtually, but that's not like putting them on your actual face.
- While an eye doctor will tweak the fit of your new glasses, there's no one to adjust a pair you get in the mail.

Will the glasses let you see straight?

Lens manufacturing is automated. So if you have a simple prescription—no astigmatism or bifocals—you're likely to get a good result no matter where you shop, says Amir Khan, MD, an ophthalmologist at the Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota. Just make sure the glasses are rated as blocking 99 to 100 percent of UV rays.

The bottom line

It might involve a little extra hassle, but buying online can save you money.

If the fit isn't quite right, a local shop might make adjustments to the glasses for little or no cost. If your eyes feel tired or you're getting headaches, ask to have the prescription double-checked. Still no good? Most websites offer a money-back guarantee, says Robert Krughoff, president of *Consumers' Checkbook*.

Chris Woolston

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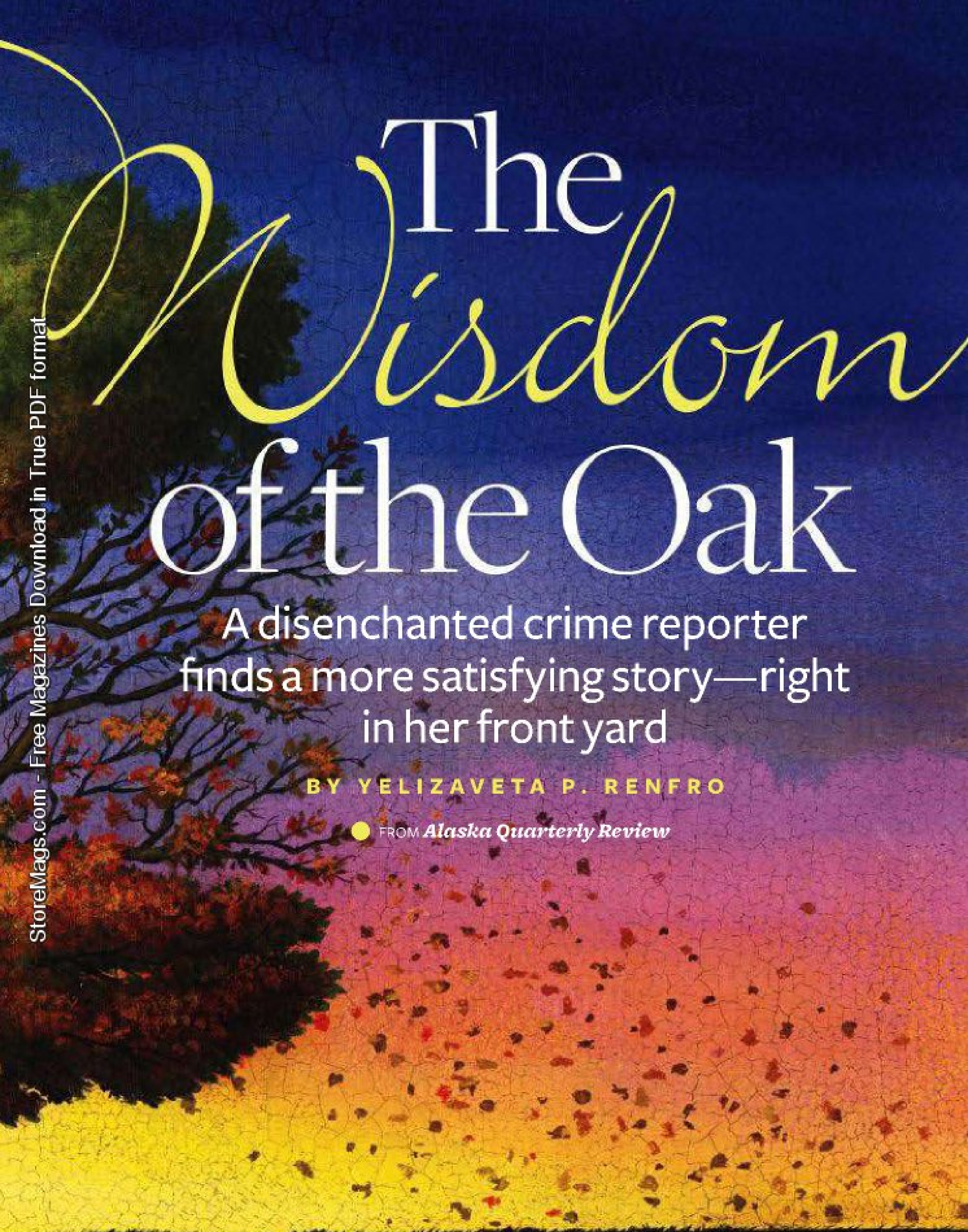
The Wisdom of the Oak

A disenchanted crime reporter finds a more satisfying story—right in her front yard

BY YELIZAVETA P. RENFRO

FROM *Alaska Quarterly Review*



ILLUSTRATED BY MARC BURCKHARDT

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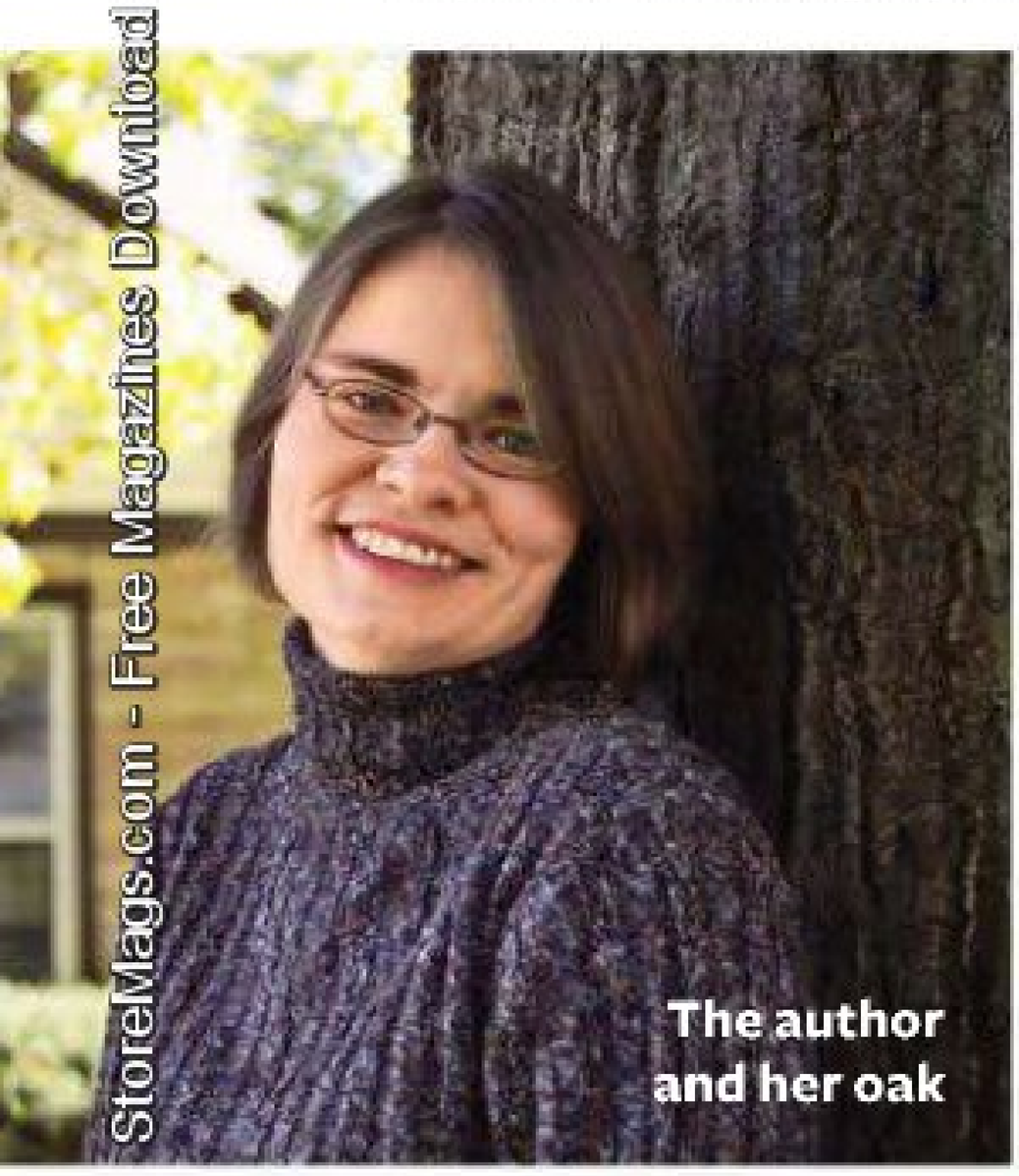
When I was just out of high school, I spent close to four years working at several daily newspapers in California. I wrote about hockey players and real estate agents, about preachers and bowlers, about criminals and mountain men. And often, as I gathered information, I would mentally abandon my own life and imagine myself as someone else.

For an afternoon, I dedicated my life to teaching pottery to senior citizens. I became a pyrotechnician and wowed thousands with my fireworks displays. I spent a day at a monastery and wanted to join up, to become a nun and devote my life to ritual—if only I believed in God. When the Texas high school football players—whom I had come to interview to find out how much they ate—asked me what I was doing later, I became the kind of party girl who hung out late with athletes. I went to medical school to learn how to perform heart transplants on nine-year-old boys, like the one I wrote about, the one whose photo I took as he clutched a Winnie-the-Pooh doll in his hospital bed.



The author and her oak

Daily I sought conversion: something powerful and sudden like a tornado to seize me and shake me senseless, something to ravish me, to take me in its clutches forever and never set me back on earth. But working at newspapers, every day the view was different, the weather turned, the story was new. I ran from one to the next, my knowledge rudimentary. I took cuttings from all those lives, lined them up on a windowsill, where they shriveled, and all that remains are yellowing clips in three-ring binders.

Now I am a dozen years removed from that life. Now what I want to learn is how to stay put. Instead of leaves of newspaper print, I collect a different kind of leaves, the real deal. I have become the student of a tree.

COURTESY JENNIFER JOSEY BORELLI

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storyknife.com

On my desk, the *police scanner chattered:* accidents, fires, homicides.

OAK This summer, when we bought our house in Omaha, we became the owners of, among other things, a middle-aged pin oak in the front yard. To claim that we own a rooted creature over 60 feet tall has a strange ring to it. The tree does not admit to being owned, nor is it likely to know that it has changed hands. It requires only that those who control the land where it lives are generous—or negligent—enough to allow it life.

I sat in the tree's shade through the muggy days, and I waited to learn something, to be told some news.

IN BRIEF Working at newspapers gave me the opportunity to live many lives vicariously. And, as it turned out, it also allowed me to suffer many deaths vicariously. Twice daily I would call the local police and fire stations. On my desk, the police scanner chattered incessantly. I listened for the injury accidents, structure fires, homicides.

When the news warranted a story, the editor would assign an inch count. "Give me 12 inches on that fire," he would bark. Or, "I want 15 inches on the homicide." At a newspaper, the perceived importance of anything—even a life—was measured in inches.

Often, however, an event wasn't deemed worthy of a full story, and then the editor would say, "Make it a brief." I wrote hundreds of them.

For example: I wrote about the body of a 50-year-old homeless man that was discovered at the landfill by garbage collectors. The police suspected "he was already dead when trash collectors unknowingly picked up the body from a Dumpster in a residential area."

OAK The oak is the U.S. National Tree. There are more than 80 species in the United States, and somewhere between 500 and 600 in the world.

In his book *Oak*, William Bryant Logan writes, "It was the great virtue of oaks that they responded not by specializing and narrowing their range, but by adapting, expanding, and radiating into more and wider-flung landscapes ... their staying power is founded on their own ability to change." He may well have been describing human beings. Oaks spread all over the world, and this one in my yard landed in Omaha. I, too, have traveled far to settle here.

IN BRIEF There was often a fine line between a brief and a story. The editor weighed a number of factors: Was it a busy news day? How much room was in the paper? Did the crime occur

Why was I not *outraged and heartbroken* over the murder?

where we had a lot of subscribers or just a few? How serious was the crime? And finally, what was the life worth?

The dead man on the Greyhound bus was a brief. He was returning to southern California from Las Vegas. "When the bus stopped, everybody got off but him," the investigator said. The 75-year-old man apparently had a heart attack, and no one noticed. Now, reading over the brief, I wonder who that man was, traveling to and from Vegas alone. I know nothing about him, and yet, what I do know makes me think he was profoundly lonely, that his fate was profoundly sad. The police claimed no crime was committed, but I am not so sure.

OAK My daughter spends an afternoon collecting acorns in her bicycle helmet, and then she redistributes them, hiding most of them inside our house. For weeks, we find them, tucked away in kitchen drawers and cupboards, in the bookcase, in my husband's shoes. He puts one under our daughter's pillow. Later, she is astonished to find it.

"I didn't put it there," she insists.

"Who do you think did?" I ask.

She looks at me for a long time. "A squirrel," she finally says, and I don't know if she really believes this or not. But I don't set her straight.

IN BRIEF I wrote the briefs more than a dozen years ago, and I have forgotten most of them. Now I scan the Crime and Fire Reports for April 29, 1997: "Infant Not Seriously Hurt in Wreck," "Man Pinned Under Truck," "Woman Set on Fire at Restaurant." The third headline catches my eye, and suddenly I remember it. I read the brief I wrote:

"A Victorville woman suffered second- and third-degree burns to 60 percent of her body Sunday after her ex doused her with gasoline and set her on fire in front of children and other witnesses in the parking lot of a pizza parlor in the 17000 block of Valley Boulevard.

"Police said Rialto resident Howard Streeter, 37, beat 39-year-old Yolanda Butler, in the Chuck E. Cheese's parking lot shortly after 3 p.m. Sunday. Streeter then got a can of gasoline out of his car, poured it on Butler and set her on fire. Streeter, chased down by several witnesses, was arrested for attempted murder. A witness helped extinguish the fire before firefighters arrived."

OAK I sit at the base of the oak, my back resting on its trunk, and try to imagine its roots spreading beneath the grass. I cannot. A mature oak might have 500 million

floorlogger.com

living root tips, and its roots might reach an area four to seven times the width of the tree's crown.

My son, not yet two, has begun to mimic me. He, too, sits with his back resting against the trunk, experiencing it, taking it in. This is what we do: We sit with trees.

IN BRIEF I find a brief dated May 8, 1997, that reports that Yolanda Butler, the woman whose ex set her on fire, died as a result of her injuries. And that is the end of the story. I can find no more about Yolanda Butler in my three-ring binder. The preciseness of certain facts is chilling: *60 percent of her body, Chuck E. Cheese's, doused with gasoline, in front of children.* And yet I cringe at the paucity of real information, of emotion. Why was I not outraged and heartbroken? I hammered out the brief and then, no doubt, picked up the phone to call another cop, to jovially say, "Hey corporal so-and-so, anything going on today in your neck of the woods?"

OAK Every day I walk on the bright striped hearts of oak that gave up their lives over 60 years ago but that endure in the floorboards of my house. Our country is made of oak, and not just the thousands of hardwood floors and woodwork in old houses. Both the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution are written in iron gall ink, most likely made from oak tree galls. Acorn flour, houses, churches, tanned leather, roofs, casks, and ships have been fashioned from parts of the oak tree.

IN BRIEF When we learned that a homicide was gang-related, it became a brief. But why? I wanted to know. "Because those people don't read the paper," my editor said. We had an audience, and it dictated content. It cared about rich white college boys who died in bar fights, about department store heiresses who were dragged to death during carjackings, about mansions that went up in smoke, but not about dead gang members, dead homeless, dead nameless.

OAK In some forests, Logan writes, oak trees of compatible species graft their roots together and "become one flesh." Through their shared root system, the stronger, dominant trees may provide the weaker trees with nutrients. In this way, even the roots of stumps can continue to live and contribute to the forest.

IN BRIEF Violence and death were all around me. Every day I walked through a minefield, and miraculously, I avoided all the mines. It was a matter of time, of luck. I had to be vigilant. The man walking across the parking lot was likely a carjacker, so I hurried up and started my car. The man in the Taco Bell was a rapist, so I'd better not stop there. My life would end in an accident on the interstate, so I'd better take the side streets. But maybe I'd wrap my car around a eucalyptus tree. Safer to call in sick. But what if an intruder came to kill me? Safer to go to work, to be lulled by the static of the police scanner. Because if I knew about all the crime in the world, maybe nothing would happen to me.

OAK The acorns keep turning up. I find one in the pocket of my old fleece sweater that I wear around the house all fall and winter. I don't remember putting it there.

Later, once I have grown attached to my pocket acorn, I reach in to feel its familiar shape, and it's gone.

IN BRIEF One time a 17-year-old girl was given a ticket for following too closely behind a highway patrol car. "Eight minutes later," my brief reads, "she lost control of her 1986 Toyota Corolla, hit the center divider and rolled. She was pronounced dead at the scene." She had reportedly been driving in excess of 100 miles per hour.

I can imagine the anger that spread through her limbs like a disease—how dare he give her a ticket?—and perhaps the fear—what would her father say? I can feel her stepping hard, and harder yet, on the accelerator, perhaps not even glancing at the speedometer. She would drive off the face of the world; this was her way of flipping the bird to the trooper who pulled her over, to authority. I could have been that girl. I had once driven my car 100 miles per hour, just to see if it would go that fast. I had, as a teenager, had a run-in with the police. I think I was that girl. But I was luckier.

OAK The arborist who diagnoses our tree with "anemia" recommends that we plant another oak. I'd like to think that the root systems of the two trees will meet, grapple, cohere. The younger, more vigorous tree will help support the older oak, prolonging its life. And later, when the older oak is dead, the younger tree will continue to benefit from its root system. They will both live longer in companionship.

I could still be *moved by others' grief*, and I didn't want to lose that.

IN BRIEF I developed a terror of speaking to the families of victims. One day, I was sent to the hospital to find the family of children who had been badly burned in a fire. For half an hour, I sat in the hospital parking lot. Finally I walked into the lobby and then turned around and walked out because, simply, I could not bear to talk to the family of these children, to peer into their sorrow like a Peeping Tom. I returned to the office and told my editor, "I did not find the family." I didn't tell him that I hadn't even looked.

OAK There is news today: The leaves have started to change, the green beginning to marble with yellow. The oak is preparing for winter, and so should I, whatever that means in the 21st century. Find the Polartec fleece, make sure the storm windows are shut, replenish the Earl Grey tea, set the thermostat to 68, plan soups, press leaves in books for winter crafts, put flannel sheets on the beds, make some hot chocolate, and learn to sit still indoors with a book.

IN DEPTH I wrote a story about a young man named Homero Vargas who was found stuffed in a 50-gallon trash can. He had died of a gunshot wound. I think one of the reasons he was not just a brief but worthy of 13 inches and a mug shot is that he had played football at a prominent high school. I talked to his former coach, who called him a "solid boy," and the crime "a sad waste of a good boy."

Several weeks after the story ran, a man came in the newsroom and asked for me. "My name is Jesus Vargas," he said. "You wrote a story about my son, Homero." He sat down across from me, took my hand, and held it. He looked at me intently and paused to control his voice. "I want to thank you so much for this wonderful story about my son."

I didn't know what to say.

"Homero was a good boy," he said. He went on to tell me about his son's strong faith, his dedication to the Seventh-day Adventist Church. He spoke about his son playing football and working at a construction company after high school. Mostly, I listened and waited for the man to leave. *I didn't do your son justice*, I wanted to say. *I didn't know him.* Homero Vargas had been 20, and I had just turned 23. And this life was about to end, but I didn't know it then.

Before he left, Jesus Vargas stood and held the newspaper tightly to his chest. "I just wanted to say thank you for this," he said. "I love you for this." And before I could respond, he was gone.

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Is your arthritis pain medicine putting you at risk for stomach issues?

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Get your VIMOVO prescription for only

$10† each month

Sign up for a VIMOVO Savings Card today.

† Requires a prescription; subject to eligibility rules; restrictions apply.

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Ask your doctor about VIMOVO.

VIMOVO is a prescription medicine that combines a proven arthritis pain reliever with built-in medication that can help protect you from stomach issues common to NSAIDs.

NSAIDs (nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) can effectively reduce the pain of osteoarthritis. But they may also lead to stomach issues which may keep you from taking the medicine you need.

VIMOVO combines a prescription arthritis pain medication with a built-in medicine that has been proven to reduce the risk of developing stomach (gastric) ulcers.*

Medicine on the outside of VIMOVO helps reduce the risk of stomach ulcers.

Illustration not actual size.

Medicine on the inside of VIMOVO helps relieve arthritis pain.

So if you're worried about potential stomach issues with your arthritis pain medication, ask your doctor about VIMOVO.

** In 6-month clinical studies, compared to enteric-coated naproxen.*

Approved Uses for VIMOVO

VIMOVO is approved to relieve the signs and symptoms of osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and ankylosing spondylitis, and to decrease the risk of stomach (gastric) ulcers in patients at risk of developing stomach ulcers from treatment with NSAIDs.

VIMOVO is not recommended as a starting treatment for relief of acute pain. Controlled studies do not extend beyond 6 months.

Important Safety Information

Like all medications that contain nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDs), VIMOVO may increase the chance of a heart attack or stroke that can lead to death. This chance increases with longer use of NSAID medicines, and in people who have heart disease. NSAID-containing medications, such as VIMOVO, should never be used before or after a type of heart surgery called coronary artery bypass graft (CABG). As with all medications that contain NSAIDs, VIMOVO may increase the chance of stomach and intestinal problems, such as bleeding or an ulcer, which can occur without warning and may cause death. Elderly patients are at greater risk for serious gastrointestinal events.

VIMOVO is not right for everyone, including patients who have had an asthma attack, hives, or other allergic reaction with aspirin or any other NSAID medicine, patients who are allergic to any of the ingredients in VIMOVO, or women in late stages of pregnancy.

Serious allergic reactions, including skin reactions, can occur without warning and can be life-threatening; discontinue use of VIMOVO at the first appearance of a skin rash, or if you develop sudden wheezing; swelling of the lips, tongue or throat; fainting; or problems swallowing.

VIMOVO should be used at the lowest dose and for the shortest amount of time as directed by your health care provider.

Tell your health care provider right away if you develop signs of active bleeding from any source.

VIMOVO can lead to onset of new hypertension or worsening of existing high blood pressure, either of which may contribute to an increased risk of a heart attack or stroke.

Speak with your health care provider before starting VIMOVO if you

- Have a history of ulcers or bleeding in the stomach or intestines
- Have heart problems, high blood pressure, or are taking high blood pressure medications
- Have kidney or liver problems

Review all the medications, even over-the-counter medications, you are taking with your health care provider before starting VIMOVO.

Talk to your health care provider about your risk for bone fractures if you take VIMOVO for a long period of time.

The most common side effects of VIMOVO include: inflammation of the lining of the stomach, indigestion, diarrhea, stomach ulcers, abdominal pain, and nausea.

For further information on VIMOVO, please see the brief summary of full Prescribing Information, including Boxed Warnings on adjacent pages.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

If you're without prescription coverage and can't afford your medication, AstraZeneca may be able to help. For more information, please visit www.astrazeneca-us.com

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Vimovo™

(naproxen/esomeprazole magnesium)

375/20•500/20 mg delayed-release tablets

AstraZeneca

IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT VIMOVO

Please read this summary carefully. It does not take the place of discussions with your doctor about the full Prescribing Information for VIMOVO and whether this drug is right for you.

WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT INFORMATION I SHOULD KNOW ABOUT VIMOVO?

VIMOVO, which contains naproxen [a nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drug (NSAID)] and esomeprazole magnesium [a proton pump inhibitor (PPI)], may increase the chance of a heart attack or stroke that can lead to death. This chance increases

- with longer use of NSAID medicines
- in people who have heart disease

NSAID medicines should never be used right before or after a heart surgery called a coronary artery bypass graft (CABG).

NSAID medicines can cause ulcers and bleeding in the stomach and intestines at any time during treatment. Ulcers and bleeding

- can happen without warning symptoms
- may cause death

The chance of a person getting an ulcer or bleeding increases with

- taking medicines called steroid hormones and blood thinners
- longer use
- smoking
- drinking alcohol
- older age
- having poor health

NSAID medicines should only be used

- exactly as prescribed
- at the lowest dose possible for your treatment
- for the shortest time needed

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF NSAIDS?

Serious side effects include

- heart attack
- stroke
- high blood pressure
- heart failure from body swelling (fluid retention)
- kidney problems including kidney failure
- bleeding and ulcers in the stomach and intestine
- low red blood cells (anemia)
- life-threatening skin reactions
- life-threatening allergic reactions
- liver problems including liver failure
- asthma attacks in people who have asthma

Other side effects include

- stomach pain
- constipation
- diarrhea
- gas
- heartburn
- nausea
- vomiting
- dizziness

Get emergency help right away if you have any of the following symptoms

- shortness of breath or trouble breathing
- chest pain
- weakness in one part or side of your body
- slurred speech
- swelling of the face or throat

Stop your NSAID medicine and call your health care provider right away if you have any of the following symptoms

- nausea
- more tired or weaker than usual
- itching
- your skin or eyes look yellow
- stomach pain
- flu-like symptoms
- vomit blood
- there is blood in your bowel movement or it is black and sticky like tar
- skin rash or blisters with fever
- unusual weight gain
- swelling of the arms and legs, hands and feet

These are not all the possible side effects with NSAIDs.

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT VIMOVO

Please read this summary carefully. It does not take the place of discussions with your doctor about the full Prescribing Information for VIMOVO and whether this drug is right for you.

WHAT IS VIMOVO?

VIMOVO is a prescription medicine used to

- relieve signs and symptoms of osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, and ankylosing spondylitis
- decrease the risk of developing stomach (gastric) ulcers in people who are at risk of developing gastric ulcers with NSAIDs

It is not known if VIMOVO is safe or effective in children under the age of 18.

WHO SHOULD NOT TAKE VIMOVO?

Do not take VIMOVO

- If you had an asthma attack, hives, or other allergic reaction after taking aspirin or other NSAID medicine
- If you are allergic to any of the ingredients in VIMOVO
- If you are allergic to any other PPI medicine
- For pain right before or after heart bypass surgery
- If you are in the third trimester of pregnancy

WHAT SHOULD I TELL MY HEALTH CARE PROVIDER BEFORE TAKING VIMOVO?

Before you take VIMOVO, tell your health care provider about **all** your medical conditions and all the medicines you take, including prescription and non-prescription, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Talk to your health care provider before taking any other NSAID-containing products.

- Using VIMOVO with other medicines can cause serious side effects
- Talk to your health care provider if you are pregnant or breast-feeding. **NSAID medicine should not be used by pregnant women late in their pregnancy**

HOW SHOULD I TAKE VIMOVO?

- Take VIMOVO at least 30 minutes before a meal
- Swallow VIMOVO tablets whole with liquid. Do not split, chew, crush, or dissolve the VIMOVO tablet
- You may use antacids while taking VIMOVO
- Do not change your dose or stop VIMOVO without first talking to your health care provider
- If you forget to take a dose of VIMOVO, take it as soon as you remember. If it is almost time for your next dose, do not take the missed dose. Take the next dose on time. Do not take 2 doses at one time to make up for a missed dose
- If you take too much VIMOVO, tell your health care provider, go to the closest hospital emergency room right away, or call your Poison Control Center at 1-800-222-1222

WHAT ARE THE POSSIBLE SIDE EFFECTS OF VIMOVO?

Serious side effects may include

- **High blood pressure**
- **Heart problems** such as congestive heart failure, heart attack, or stroke
- **Active bleeding**
- **Serious allergic reactions**
- **Serious skin reactions**
- **Liver problems**
- **Bone fracture**

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IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT VIMOVO

Please read this summary carefully. It does not take the place of discussions with your doctor about the full Prescribing Information for VIMOVO and whether this drug is right for you.

Tell your health care provider or get emergency help right away if you have any of the following symptoms

- chest pain, weakness, or slurred speech
- trouble breathing or wheezing
- swelling of face, throat, or body
- severe skin blisters or peeling
- blood in your bowel movement or it is black and sticky like tar
- yellowing of skin or eyes

The most common side effects of VIMOVO include

- inflammation of the lining of the stomach
- indigestion
- diarrhea
- stomach ulcers
- stomach pain
- nausea

These are not all the possible side effects of VIMOVO. Call your health care provider for medical advice about side effects.

You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

OTHER INFORMATION ABOUT NONSTEROIDAL ANTI-INFLAMMATORY DRUGS (NSAIDS)

- Aspirin is an NSAID medicine but it does not increase the chance of a heart attack. Aspirin can cause bleeding in the brain, stomach, and intestines. Aspirin can also cause ulcers in the stomach and intestines
- Some of these NSAID medicines are sold in lower doses without a prescription (over-the-counter). Talk to your health care provider before using over-the-counter NSAIDs for more than 10 days

NSAID medicines that need a prescription

Generic Name	Trade Name
Celecoxib	Celebrex
Diclofenac	Cataflam, Voltaren, Arthrotec (combined with misoprostol)
Diflunisal	Dolobid
Etodolac	Lodine, Lodine XL
Fenoprofen	Nalfon, Nalfon 200
Flurbiprofen	Ansaid
Ibuprofen	Motrin, Tab-Profen, Vicoprofen* (combined with hydrocodone), Combunox (combined with oxycodone)
Indomethacin	Indocin, Indocin SR, Indo-Lemmon, Indomethagan
Ketoprofen	Oruvail
Ketorolac	Toradol
Mefenamic Acid	Ponstel
Meloxicam	Mobic
Nabumetone	Relafen
Naproxen	Naprosyn, Anaprox, Anaprox DS, EC-Naproxyn, Naprelan, VIMOVO
Oxaprozin	Daypro
Piroxicam	Feldene
Sulindac	Clinoril
Tolmetin	Tolectin, Tolectin DS, Tolectin 600

* Vicoprofen contains the same dose of ibuprofen as over-the-counter (OTC) NSAIDs, and is usually used for less than 10 days to treat pain. The OTC NSAID label warns that long-term continuous use may increase the risk of heart attack or stroke.

For more information, call 1-800-236-9933 or go to www.VIMOVO.com

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I love you for this. I cringed at the words. I did not deserve love for this. After Jesus Vargas left, I saw that I could have written a better story about his son after talking to him, but I also saw that it wouldn't have been good enough. I could write 50 inches, 100 inches. It would never be sufficient.

Instead, I wrote a column about Jesus Vargas coming to see me and the difficulties in maintaining empathy as a police reporter. I wrote about the challenges of compressing a life into a tight news story. My editor chose the title, "Bringing Homero Vargas Back to Life." If only words had that power. At the end of my column, I wrote that I could still be moved by others' grief. And I concluded: "May I never lose that." A month later, I left newspapers for good. And I hope that I haven't lost it.

I love you for this, he said to me, baring himself before leaving. He meant the words as a blessing, and they have followed me for years. But at the time, they did not feel like a blessing.

I love you for this. I watch my children run under the tree. We wait for the arborist to return. He will climb into our tree and peer into its heart, see the damage there. He will tell us how deep the wound is. *I love you for this.* ■

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THE BLUE ROBE

How joyful to be together, alone
as when we first were joined
in our little house by the river
long ago, except that now we know

each other, as we did not then;
and now instead of two stories fumbling
to meet, we belong to one story
that the two, joining, made. And now

we touch each other with the tenderness
of mortals, who know themselves:
how joyful to feel the heart quake

at the sight of a grandmother,
old friend in the morning light,
beautiful in her blue robe!

Wendell Berry

FROM *THE SELECTED POEMS OF WENDELL BERRY* (COUNTERPOINT PRESS, 1998).
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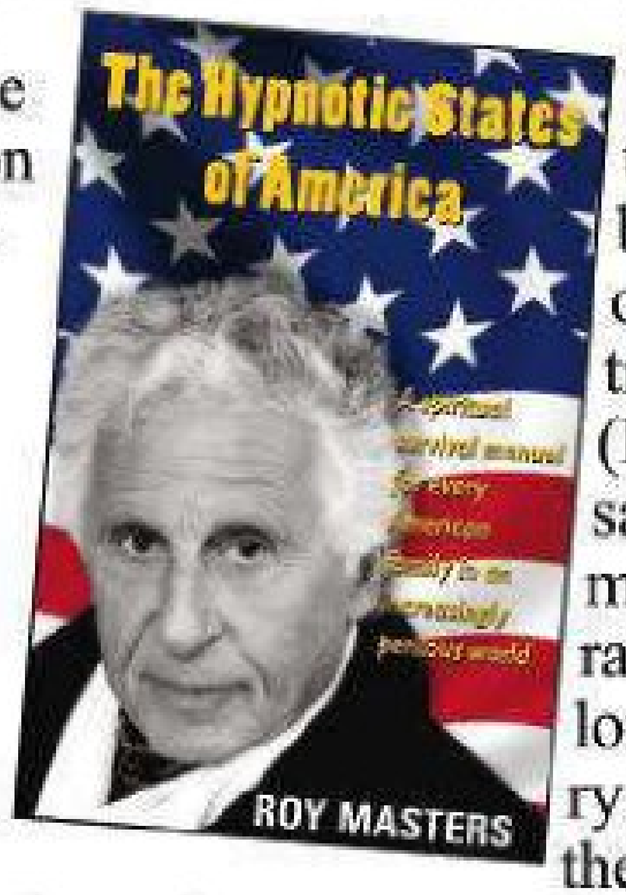
Soldiers aren't the only ones with post-traumatic stress disorder

The world is full of books on how to influence and manipulate people – through charm, intimidation, soaring oratory, subtle suggestion, salesmanship, bribery, ruthlessness and propaganda – in other words, pressure of every conceivable kind. But where are the books on how NOT to be influenced adversely – on how to remain calm and graceful in the face of even the worst stresses and difficulties, and thus to live life as a truly whole and happy person?



In *The Hypnotic States of America*, world-renowned stress expert and former hypnotherapist Roy Masters explains with disarming clarity both the problem and the inspired solution. The problem is that emotional traumas – which virtually everyone experiences – tend to implant negative thoughts, emotions and behaviors in the victim. For the soldier, it's called post-traumatic stress disorder, but in truth, says Masters, everyone suffers from the same syndrome to one degree or another. And without help, our lives are profoundly impacted for the worse.

Fortunately, he also offers real, life-changing help. In fact, if understood and taken to heart, Masters' techniques will unlock the reader's emotional prison and profoundly change his or her future for the better.

Masters' simple and proven methods are so effective that they now comprise the centerpiece of a successful program within the U.S. military that is helping thousands of service members and their families to overcome the ravages of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). Teaching the exact same insights, he has helped millions of listeners via his radio counseling show – the longest-running in radio history – including celebrities like the late John Wayne, to extricate themselves from vexing personal problems, substance abuse and emotional traumas.

"[The author's technique] works for me. It calms my soul, enhances my thinking, and improves my emotional regulation. I am thankful to be a more resilient chaplain." – Chaplain (LTC) Phillip L. Pringle, US Army (Southern Baptist).

"For many, one hour with Roy Masters will be more beneficial than years of traditional insight psychotherapy." – Celebrated psychiatrist Clancy D. McKenzie, M.D., Director of the Philadelphia Psychiatric Consultation Service, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

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Quotes

I know for sure that what we dwell on is who we become.

Oprah Winfrey

No pressure, no diamonds.

Mary Case, screenwriter

When people go through something rough in life, they say, "I'm taking it one day at a time." Yes, so is everybody. Because that's how time works. *Hannibal Buress*, comedian

Never harbor grudges; they sour your stomach and do no harm to anyone else. *Robertson Davies*

If you're willing to fail interestingly, you tend to succeed interestingly.

Edward Albee

When I first started racing, my father said, "Win the race as slow as you can."

Richard Petty, race-car driver

There's nothing like a gleam of humor to reassure you that a fellow human being is ticking inside a strange face. *Eva Hoffman*, author

Delete the adjectives and [you'll] have the facts. *Harper Lee*

Time sneaks up on you like a windshield on a bug. *John Lithgow*

That's the beauty of argument—if you argue correctly, you're never wrong.

Aaron Eckhart
as Nick Naylor in the film
Thank You for Smoking

"Fearless" is living in spite of those things that scare you to death.

Taylor Swift

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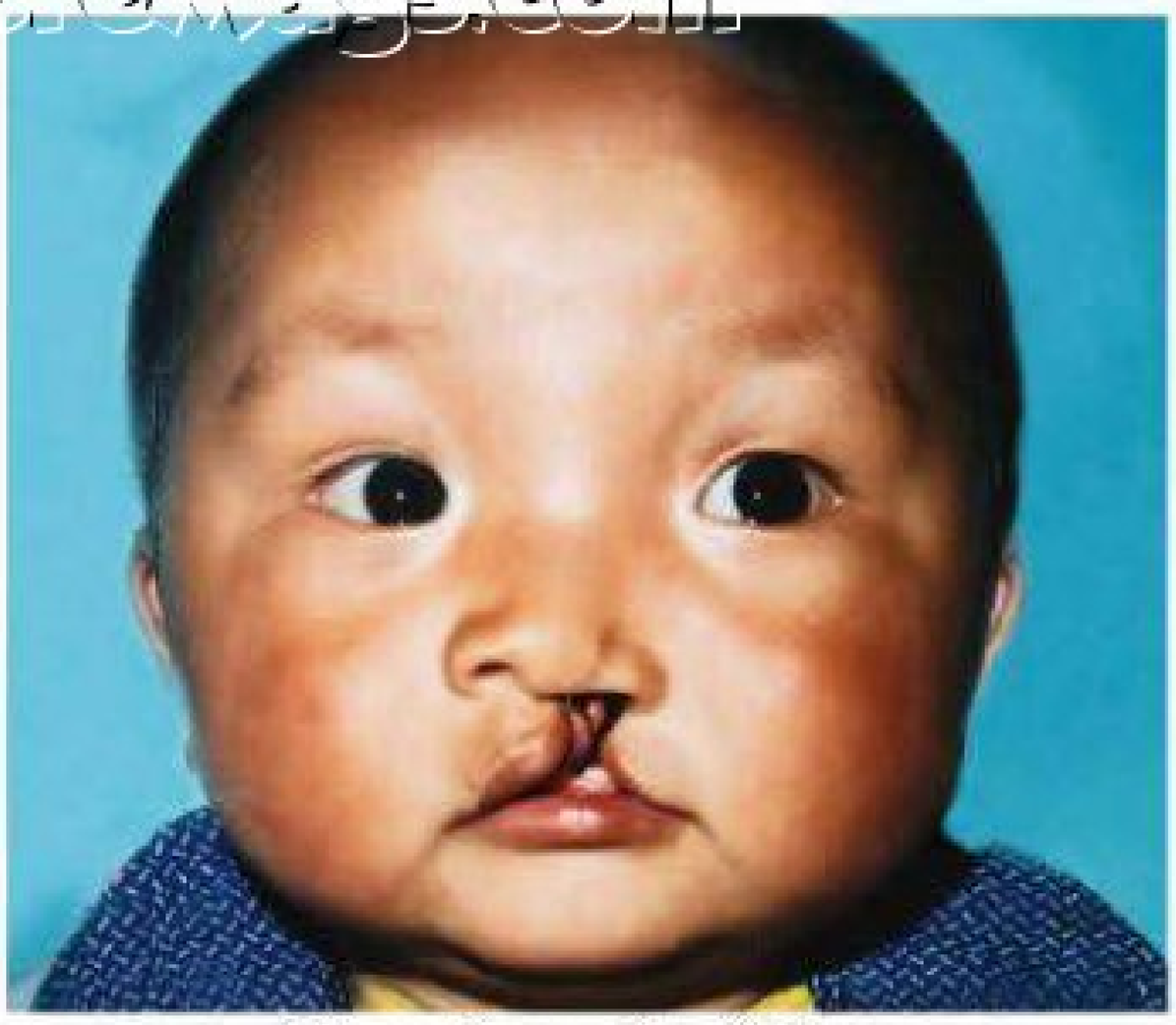
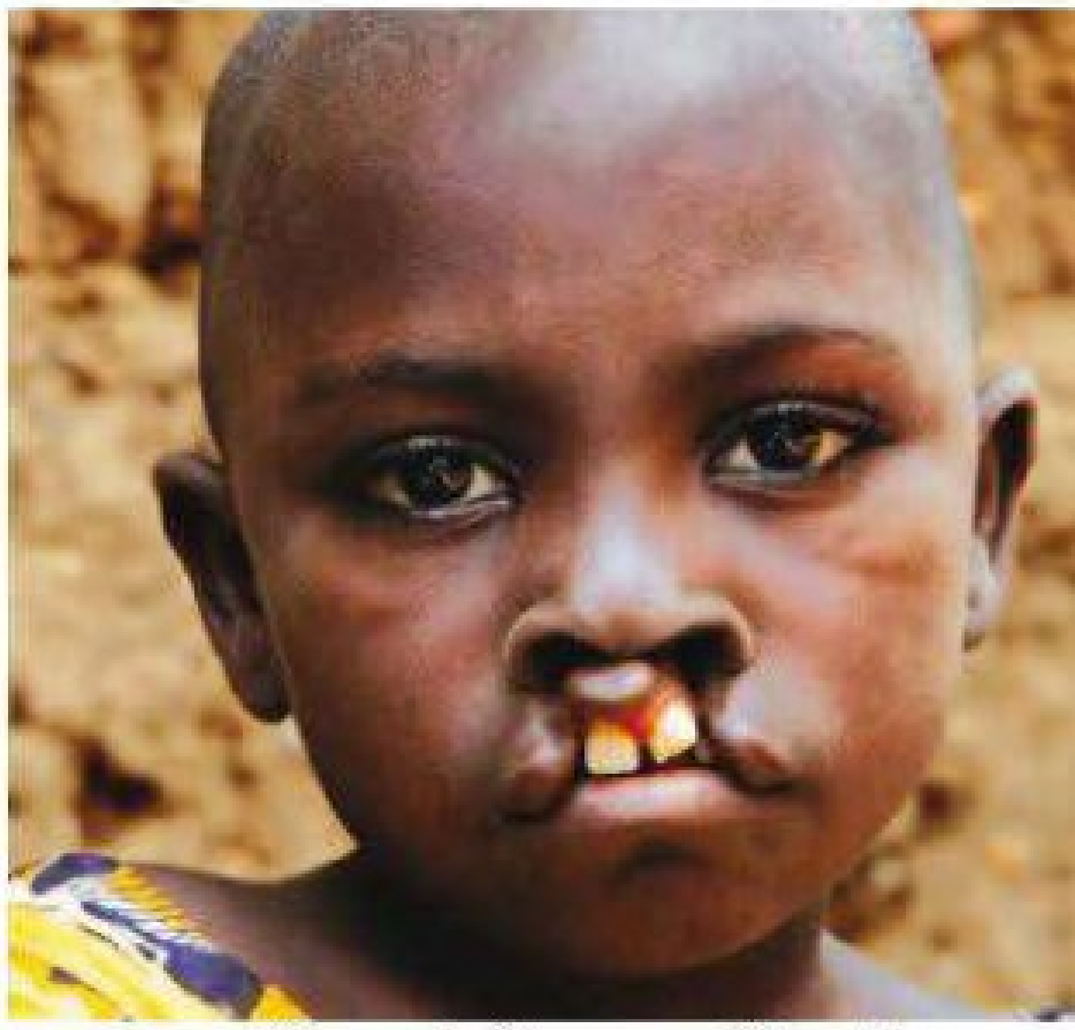


Ming, 6 months, China

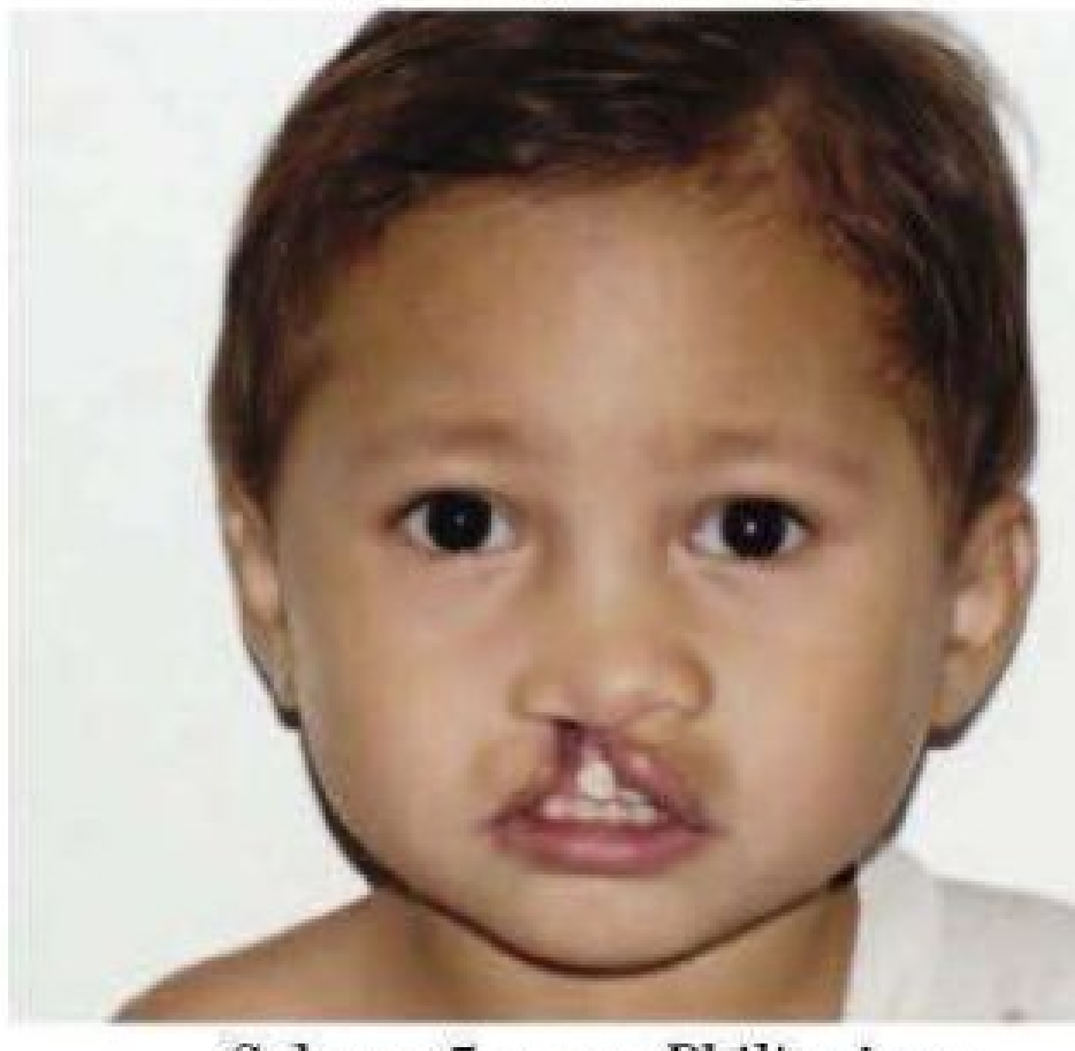
Shiva, 1 year, India

Durgap, 5 years, India



Funmi, 8 years, Nigeria

Mot, 13 years, Cambodia



Salazar, 5 years, Philippines

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Off Base

I'd been secretly dating for several months, and it was time to break the news to my very protective father. My mother thought he'd take it better if she explained to him that my boyfriend was a Marine who had just returned from Iraq. This pleased Dad immensely.

"A Marine? Good!" he said. "That means he can take orders."

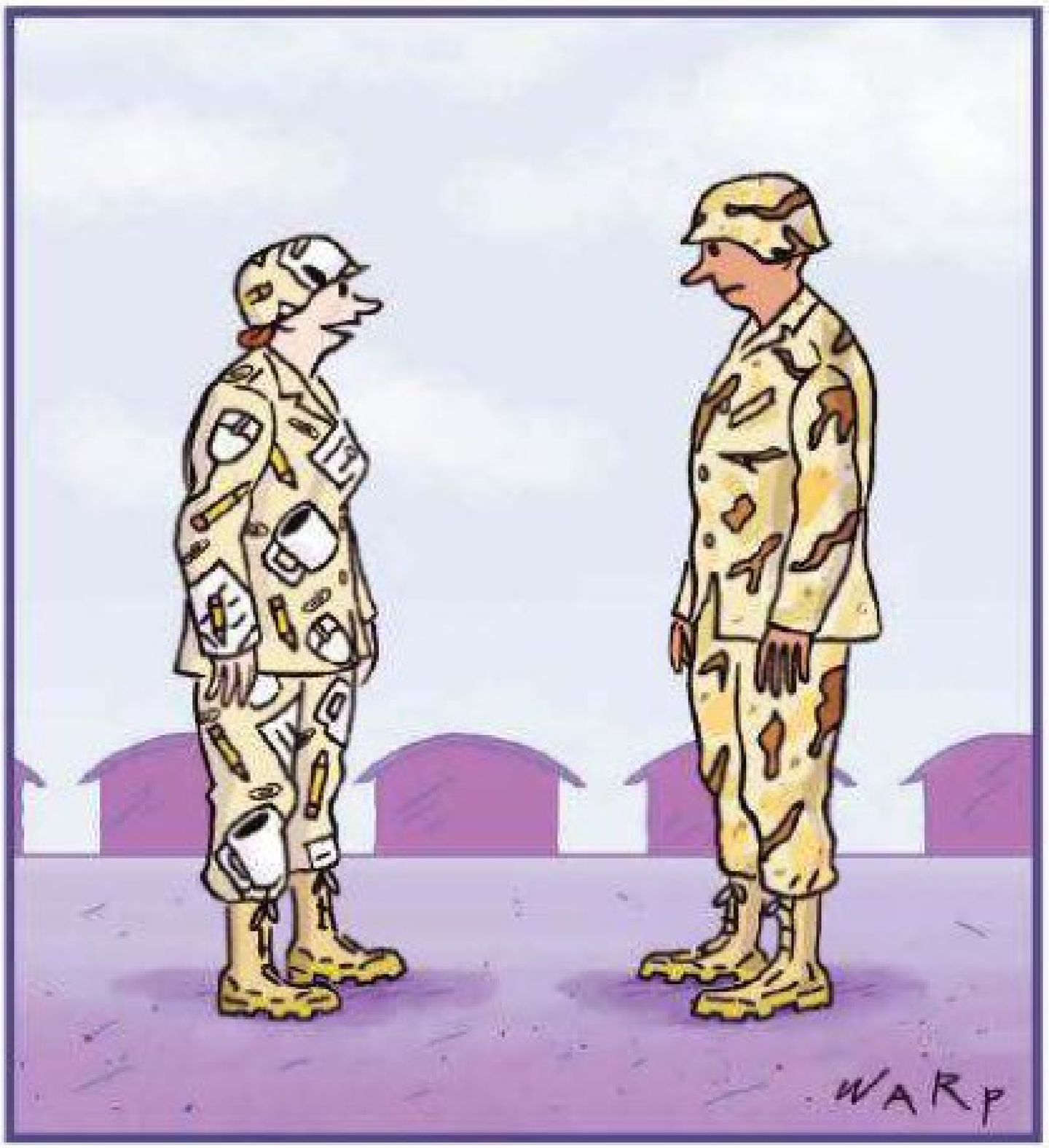
Melissa Esmilla, Detroit, Michigan

My second graders were assigned the task of writing thank-you cards to soldiers serving in the Middle East. One of them wrote, "Thank you for protecting us! I hope we win!"

Georgina McCarthy, Norwich, Connecticut

When my very pregnant niece, a sergeant in the New York Army National Guard, accidentally knocked over a glass of water, one of her soldiers volunteered to help clean it up. As he was mopping up the mess, an officer walked in.

"Private, what's going on in here?" he asked.



"I work in an office."

To the officer's horror, the private replied, "Sir, the sergeant's water broke, and I'm helping her clean up."

David Heaton, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Upon returning from a stint in Iraq, my sister insisted that the best part about being home was having real food again: "The Lunchables I had for breakfast was great!"

Garrett Lee Thorne, Arvada, Colorado

Your favorite new joke, funny military anecdote, or crazy news story might be worth $$$. See page 105 for details.

ILLUSTRATED BY KIM WARP

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Word Power

BY ALISON RAMSEY

Decorator's Delight With spring in full swing and summer sneaking up, it's time to shake off the decor doldrums and set your inner home stylist free. Before you start testing paint chips and fabric swatches, test yourself with this month's quiz, full of words you might encounter while sprucing up. **Answers on next page.**

1. cabriole *n.*—A: china cabinet. B: curved furniture leg. C: tea cart.

2. trug *n.*—A: shallow basket. B: triangular jug. C: padded footrest.

3. bolster *n.*—A: comforter cover. B: bed skirt. C: long pillow.

4. pilaster *n.*—A: column jutting from a wall. B: ornate molding on ceiling. C: recessed cubbyhole.

5. torchère *n.*—A: propane fireplace. B: stand for a candlestick. C: wall-mounted light.

6. grommet *n.*—A: sliding drawer. B: eyelet to protect an opening. C: anchor chain for hanging lamps.

7. pounce *v.*—A: transfer a stencil design. B: add light. C: combine fabrics.

8. patina *n.*—A: weathered look of copper or bronze. B: two-toned floors. C: high-gloss surface.

9. finial *n.*—A: ornament at the tip of a lamp or a curtain rod. B: pull string. C: metal drawer handle.

10. organdy *n.*—A: polka-dot pattern. B: insulating lining. C: transparent muslin.

11. newel *n.*—A: sunny nook. B: central post of a circular staircase. C: arched doorway between adjoining rooms.

12. bergère *n.*—A: upholstered chair with exposed wood. B: one-armed couch. C: semicircular occasional table.

13. ceruse *n.*—A: eye-catching color. B: table runner. C: pigment composed of white lead.

14. Bauhaus *adj.*—of or relating to ... A: rococo style. B: a German school of functional design. C: an eco-friendly house.

15. incise *v.*—A: prune. B: slice. C: engrave.

Deep Roots

For those who aren't necessarily interior design–inclined, the warm weather signals a return to the outdoors—and to **barbecues,** in particular. This seemingly all-American word comes from the late-17th-century Spanish *barbacoa*, a framework for supporting meat over a fire. And that dates back even further to the Haitian *barbakoa*, a tree house, which has a similar structure.

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Answers

1. cabriole—*[B]* curved furniture leg. "That *cabriole* shape mimics Rufus's hind leg!" the collector's son boasted.

2. trug—*[A]* shallow basket. Barbara's handmade *trugs* are ideal for carrying flowers.

3. bolster—*[C]* long pillow. A pair of comfy *bolsters* soften the ends of a daybed.

4. pilaster—*[A]* column jutting from a wall. Two enormous *pilasters* flanked the entrance, dwarfing the hand-carved door.

5. torchère—*[B]* stand for a candlestick. "Would you mind bringing the *torchère* over here?" Dean's grandmother intoned from the dark corner.

6. grommet—*[B]* eyelet to protect an opening. The *grommets* jangled as I yanked open the drapes and tried to duck out.

7. pounce—*[A]* transfer a stencil design. Diane tried to duplicate her drawing by *pouncing* it, but the effect was lost.

8. patina—*[A]* weathered look of copper or bronze. "How long before the roof dulls to that fantastic *patina*?" Janice asked.

9. finial—*[A]* ornament at the tip of a lamp or a curtain rod. Tacky *finials* cluttered the stark window treatments.

10. organdy—*[C]* transparent muslin. To soften your bedroom, try *organdy* curtains—they'll filter the light.

11. newel—*[B]* central post of a circular staircase. The handrail is sound, but the *newel* needs replacing.

12. bergère—*[A]* upholstered chair with exposed wood. Invented in the 1700s, the *bergère* was designed for lounging.

13. ceruse—*[C]* pigment composed of white lead. Applying a *ceruse* finish may help conceal the table's flaws.

14. Bauhaus—*[B]* of or relating to a German school of functional design. The *Bauhaus* influence was clear in her early drawings.

15. incise—*[C]* engrave. A carpenter may *incise* his name into his furniture.

VOCABULARY RATINGS

- **9 and below: Nate Berkus knockoff**
- **10–12: designer on a dime**
- **13–15: HGTV Design Star**

IPAD EXTRA To play an interactive version of Word Power, download the *Reader's Digest* magazine app from the iTunes Store.

Sound Smarter

"What's the single most common error you hear?" Look no further than the question itself: While ***single most*** isn't the worst gaffe, it does make some of us cringe almost every day. The phrase is redundant, so stick with *most*, which is already superlative and doesn't need any help. While you're at it, avoid *absolute best* and *absolute worst*.

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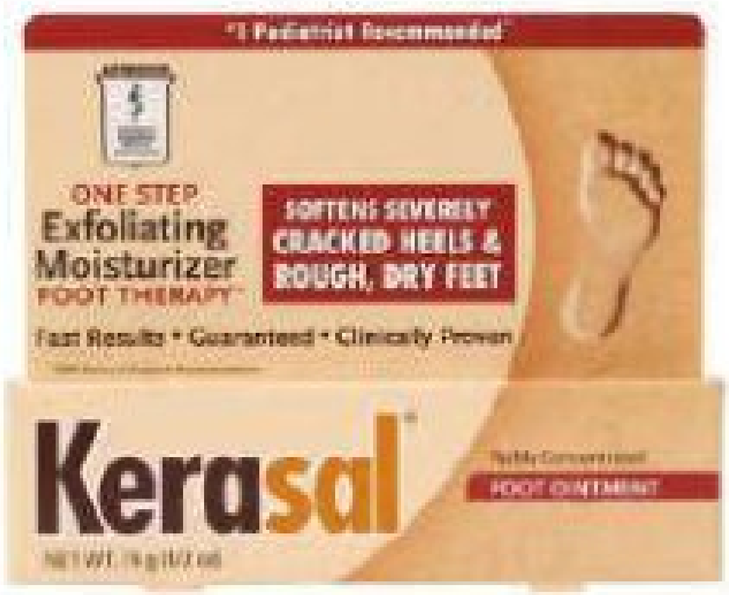

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Laugh! :)

A local charity had never received a donation from the town's banker, so the director made a phone call.

"Our records show you make $500,000 a year, yet you haven't given a penny to charity," the director began. "Wouldn't you like to help the community?"

The banker replied, "Did your research show that my mother is ill, with extremely expensive medical bills?"

"Um, no," mumbled the director.

"Or that my brother is blind and unemployed? Or that my sister's husband died, leaving her broke with four kids?"

"I ... I ... I had no idea."

"So," said the banker, "if I don't give them any money, why would I give any to you?"

"The last thing she said to me was 'Would it kill you to apologize?'"

Tats Not Right

If truth-in-advertising laws governed your tattoos, here's what the ink would actually say:

- Still in my rebellious rite-of-passage phase.
- I anticipate always feeling as whimsical as I was when I chose this.
- Thinking-ahead deficient.
- Personal names on my body are not necessarily indicative of my relationship with that person when you read this.
- I regretted this one almost immediately.
- It may be wrong to assume that I know what this symbol represents.
- Actively taking a role in reducing the number of potential places that might employ me.

Darren C. Addy,
on mcsweeneys.net

Instead of saying, "And here's your receipt," cashiers should say, "Will you throw this away for me?"

Comic *Nick Vatterott*

ILLUSTRATED BY RANDY GLASBERGEN

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Product Hailed by Doctors as the Solution for Back Pain

Doctor developed decompression belt has been called the solution for back pain.
Dr. Michael Ho announced he is giving 50% off. Due to the May rush, each household is limited to only 2 belts.

By Mark Charron
Health and Lifestyle

Back pain affects 8 out of 10 people. While pills provide temporary relief, the condition can reoccur because pills mask the symptoms and do not target the cause of the pain. Other treatments cost thousands of dollars or have substantial health risks. "That's why most people end up "living" with their bad back," says Dr. Michael Ho.

Dr. Michael Ho is a doctor with over 20 years of clinical experience specializing in treating the cause of chronic back pain, including Degenerative Disc Disease, Sciatic Nerve Pain, Scoliosis, Spinal Stenosis and Herniated / Bulging discs.

"Many people have back pain due to spinal disc compression. This can result in back pain, which if left untreated, can lead to more serious conditions."

Dr. Ho has developed a back supporting decompression belt that can be used at home, allowing you to help relieve your back pain, while saving time and money. It is endorsed by medical professionals and customers that have suffered with long-term, chronic back pain.

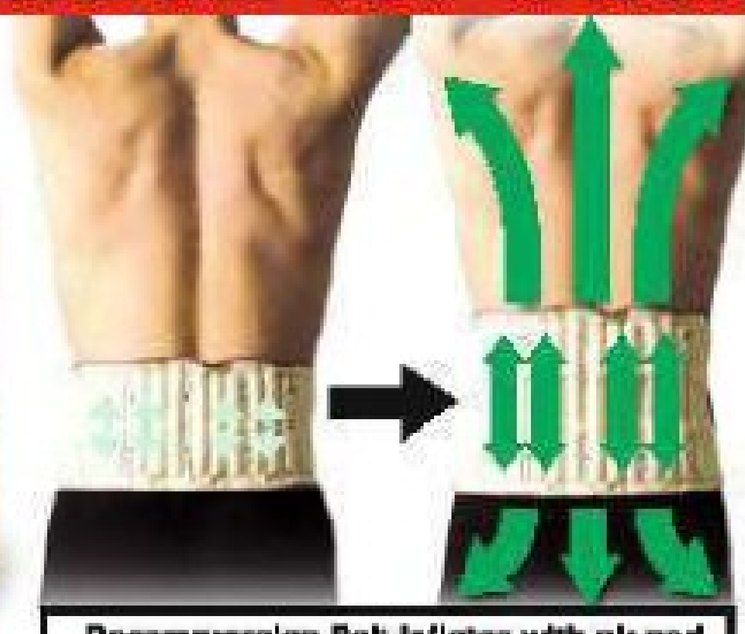
"I have used many modalities to treat my patients, but nothing is as effective as the decompression belt. To effectively treat someone with back pain, the patient must receive treatment everyday for 6 - 8 weeks. People cannot afford the time or money to visit the doctor everyday. I developed this belt because patients need a device they can use at home. By treating themselves daily, it will speed up recovery time and increase the overall effectiveness of the treatment. Whether you're working, walking or gardening, this belt can help protect and treat your back," says Dr. Ho.

Dr. Ho's Decompression Belt expands to help decompress the spine to provide support and help relieve the pain. The belt will help relieve your pain in as little as 20 minutes, even if you've suffered with back pain for many years. And you can even wear the belt while doing activities.

As an exclusive Special offer, Dr. Ho has agreed to give the first 100 customers 50% off as well as include a free pair of his Back Pain Relieving Air Orthotics worth a value of $80! "The Decompression Belt will help relieve your back pain safely without the use of drugs. You don't have to live with your back pain any longer."

To be one of the first 100 people, please call 1-877-792-1324 or visit www.DrhoBelt.com

New Innovation for Back Pain Sufferers



Decompression Belt inflates with air and expands to stretch tight back muscles. Helps relieve pain related to degenerative discs, herniated discs and pinched nerves.

Belt inflates with air, expands vertically & stretches to relieve low back pain

DR-HO'S Back Belt helps relieve:

- Chronic & acute back pain
- Trouble sleeping due to back pain
- Leg pain related to degenerative disc
- Pain from degenerative & herniated discs
- Aching back from walking, driving, lifting
- Poor Posture
- Sore back from child or elderly care
- Back pain from working or sports
- Sciatic pain or pinched nerves

50% OFF SALE

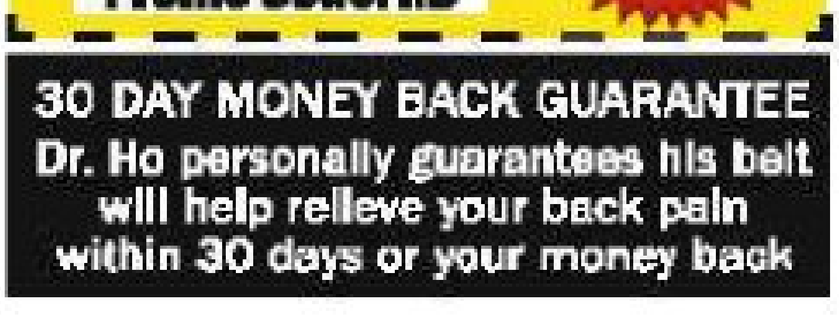
▶▶▶ Great for working, walking, gardening, golfing and better posture!

"Every patient with back pain should wear this belt because it gives core strength and support in your spine, and a traction effect for great pain relief. Patients with chronic back pain can wear this belt and get their life back. They can feel more confident, be more active, and do things that they love doing."

"This belt feels like the weight is taken off of you. Pain pills only mask the pain. With the belt I can be pain free. My grandson loves to be picked up. But you don't realize how much pressure that puts on your back. With my belt, I don't have to worry!"

DISCOUNT COUPON

First 100 customers get Back Pain Relieving Air Orthotics FREE!



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www.DrhoBelt.com

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Reader's Digest

Reader's Digest

Now Playing at the Cinemom

Renting a film? Check My Mom's Movie Review, where comic Lauren Palmigiano's mother gives her opinions.

Burlesque
Oh. My. God. Loved it. I will watch this 100 times. If I'm in jail and they ask what I want for my last meal—I'll say, "The *Burlesque* DVD and lobster."

The Town
I thought it was the Betty White movie, so I was very surprised when I saw it was the Ben Affleck movie. Actually, I didn't understand a lot of what they were saying because they had the thickest Boston accents I've ever heard. It sounded like a foreign language, but I know it was English.

Shutter Island
I thought it was going to be really scary. But I only screamed one time. A one-screamer. Leonardo DiCaprio's hair in the movie looks terrible. They gave him a bowl cut. He has a tiny Band-Aid on his forehead. They never explain why it's there. Maybe he had a pimple.

From funnyordie.com

I know it's supposed to be pejorative, but I like the sound of *Obamacare*. I imagine him making me soup and reading me stories.

Comic *Matt Suddain*

Sarah, the self-appointed arbiter of the town's morals, stuck her nose into everyone's business. She made a mistake, however, when she accused her neighbor George of being an alcoholic after spotting his pickup parked in front of a bar one afternoon.

"George, everyone who sees it there will know what you're doing," she told him in front of their church group.

George ignored her and walked away. Later that evening, he parked his pickup in front of Sarah's house and left it there all night.

Submitted by *Chuck Welch*, Houston, Texas

I just met the coolest gynecologist. He's an O.B.G.B.Y.O.B.

Stuckey & Murray, comedysmack.com

Your favorite new joke, funny anecdote, or crazy news story might be worth $$$. See page 105 for details.

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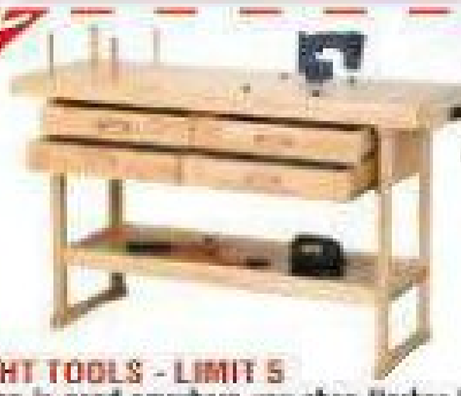

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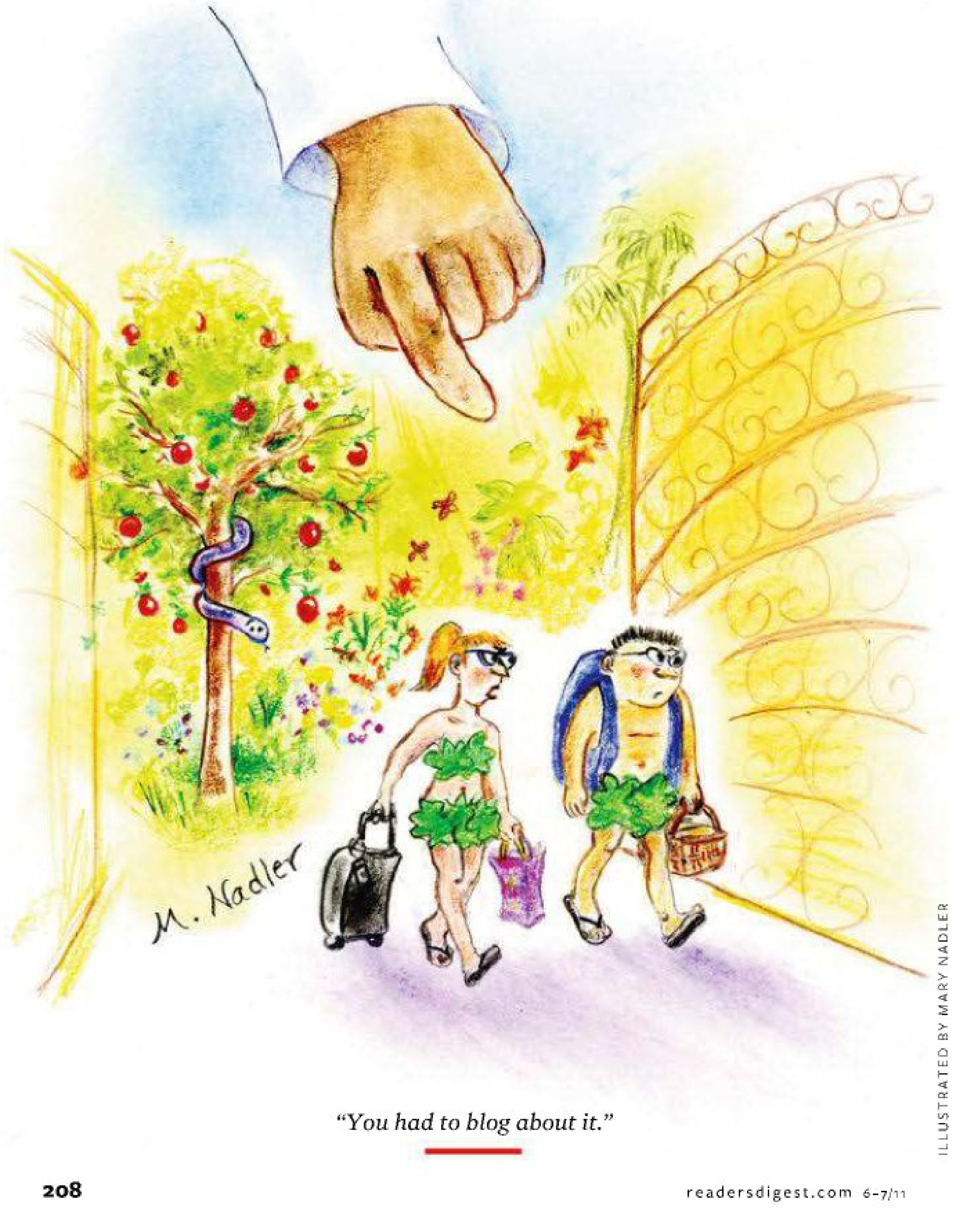

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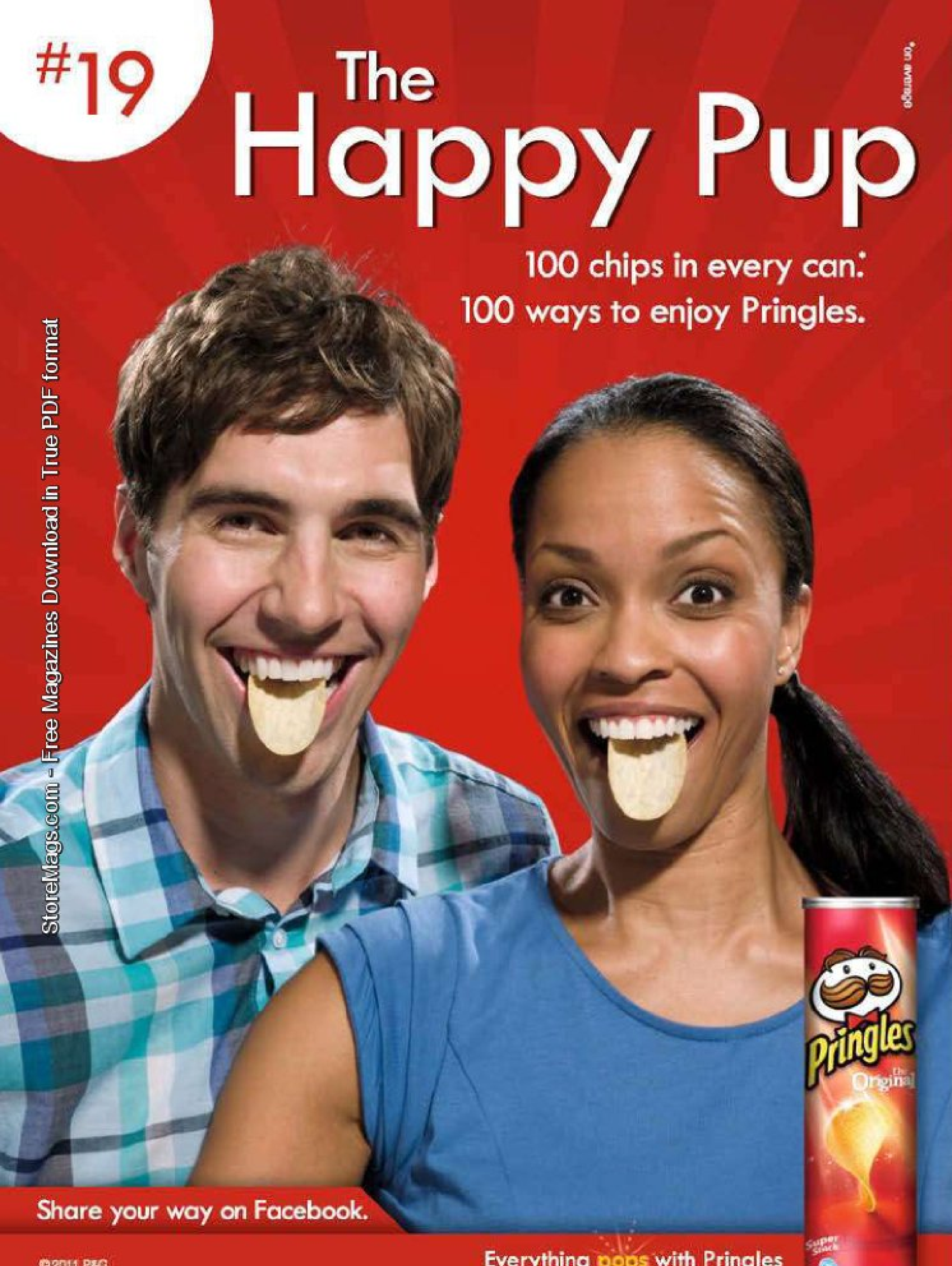

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